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THE TWO

LOST CENTURIES OF BRITAIN.

BY

WM. H. BABCOCK.

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PREFACE.

THIS little book is the outgrowth of an earnest endeavor to see clearly in my own mind, and for my own purposes, a part of the life of sixth century Britain. Almost at the beginning, I found that this implied much more, every decade hanging to the next like the links of a chain. Authority suggested authority; one problem tempted the inquirer to another. My mass of notes grew bulky, even portentous. The natural outlet was by a careful consecutive statement, necessarily for the most part in narrative form and covering all that was really germane to the purpose in hand.

This proved an arduous undertaking, though not without a charm. Working in such materials, one could not but find it so. And now that it is ended, I am encouraged to think that it may serve the turn of others besides myself; and even entertain those who have no special object in view besides enjoyment. At the worst, one may look for sympathetic readers among the multitude who have delved in the same mine; alas! with the too frequent result of mutual contradiction. I, too, have contradicted a little, as in duty bound; but I beg not to be regarded as doing so out of incurable

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perversity. One would wish to stand well with his most reliable audience.

There are those who will not concede that I am writing history, because I admit and present the probable, which is not provable in any strict sense. This raises the question of what history means. If it be a setting forth of the past as the past verily was, then the aid of inference and analogy cannot be excluded. A string of barren facts, with nothing to correlate, illustrate, or explain them, would be nearly as misleading as the wildest fiction. By the aid of a reasonable and regulated imagination, we may go right; without it, we are certain to go wrong. A grinning skeleton is a very demonstrable residuum; but what idea does it convey of the fair young girl whose beauty was built up thereon?

The foundation of every work like this must necessarily be the same. I have accepted Gildas on the authority of Dr. Guest and Mr. Green, making conscientiously the most of him. There really is more than would be supposed, when his hints are examined thoughtfully and in detail. Nennius, explained by Mr. Skene, is of even more capital importance. Without access to the manuscripts, I have necessarily been guided in the main by the printed editions of Dr. Gunn, and others, as I find them. For the Chronicles, I have generally preferred Ethelward, although it matters little. The early Welsh poetry of Llywarch,

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Aneurin, Taliessin, Merddin, and lesser bards I have used freely and found particularly fruitful. A great mass of publications like the *Journal of the Archæological Society*, the *Archæological Journal*, the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, the *Cambro-Britain*, and the "Proceedings of the Archæological Institute" have been studied volume by volume and reduced to more manageable shape. In "Geoffrey of Monmouth" and in "Henry of Huntington," fancy and real tradition are interwoven, the difference being chiefly of degree. Yet we cannot afford to discard them; nor have I done so.

Among modern writings, I have profited most by Mr. Skene's "The Four Ancient Books of Wales" and "Celtic Scotland;" Professor Pearson's "History of the Early and Middle Ages of England;" Professor Rhys's "Celtic Britain;" Dr. Guest's "Origines Celtica" and scattered papers; Mr. Whittaker's "History of Manchester;" Mr. Stephens's "Literature of the Cymry;" Dr. Freeman's various histories and addresses; Mr. Wright's "The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon;" Mr. Coode's "The Romans in Britain;" and Mr. Green's "The Making of England."

One may add to these a long list of works consulted or studied separately or comparatively, partly or wholly, once only or repeatedly, as their relative importance to the end in view would seem to dictate: "The Mabinogion" of Lady Guest; Professor Boyd Dawkins's

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"Cave-Hunting;" Mr. Stuart-Glennie's "Arthurian "Localities" and "Merlin;" Nash's "Taliessin;" Williams's "Barddas" and "the Iola MSS.;" Loftie's "History of London;" Poste's "Britannia Antiqua;" Morant's "History of Essex;" Earle's "Two Old English Chronicles;" Allen's "History of London;" Mrs. Boger's "Myths, Scenes, and Worthies of Somerset;" "The Encyclopædia Britannica;" La Villemarque's "Chants de la Bretagne;" Sharon Turner's "History of the Saxons;" Akerman's "Remains of Pagan Saxondom;" Grant Allen's "Anglo-Saxon Britain;" "Roman Britain," of the same series; Thorpe's "Codex Exoniensis;" "Florence of Worcester;" Dr. Guest's "History of English Metres;" Dr. Child's first six volumes of "English Ballads;" Taylor's "Ballads and Songs of Brittany;" certain notable papers of Symonds and W. Basil Jones; Malory's "History of King Arthur;" Gibbon; Mommsen; Sammes's "Antiquities of Britain;" Branston and Le Roy's "History of Winchester;" Akerman's "Numismatic Manual," with others like it, and the current reviews and magazines, both archæological and popular, which have contained many articles bearing on various branches of my subject.

This is by no means an exhaustive enumeration, unless in the sense of exhausting the reader on the threshold. For fear of such result I will say no more.

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THE TWO
LOST CENTURIES OF BRITAIN.

CHAPTER I.

THE PREPARATION FOR THEM.

ALMOST every people has had its beginning in prehistoric chaos; but one only, in Europe at least, ever sank back for a season out of the daylight into the abyss. There is no parallel to the long submergence of Britain following the withdrawal of Rome: a disordered darkness brooding over the rise of new island powers and the flickering away of old broken splendor! For long another "world" in the western sea dimly reported; then through four centuries a land of open travel and continued record, an integral member of the superb Roman organism; and then again suddenly relegated to the myths and the shades, a haunt of spectral ferrymen and their dead passengers, a doubtful and ghostly hoverer on the frontier of knowledge! Yet to this third era belonged Hengist and Vortigern; the saint of the Hallelujah field, the beguiling Rowena;

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Vortimer, redoubtable in life and death; Ambrose, Prince of the Sanctuary; Geraint, the hero of Enid and of Llongborth; Arthur triumphing on Mount Baden; Kyndylan of the Powys purple, defending in vain the shining city Uricon,—"the white town, the wasted town, the town of flame!" No wonder that the fancy of mankind, from Mark the Anchorite to Alfred Tennyson, has lingered in that dreamland of enchantment!

Even the gravest researchers have yielded to the spell and gone knight-erranting as on no other field. To follow their wild excursions, to witness their shock and mutual overthrow, is at first only to multiply bewilderment. Hardly one fact is accorded standing-room by all; hardly one assertion has escaped emphatic denial. We are not to know in peace who came to Britain; or when or why they came; whom they found there; or what they did with these predecessors. We have the names of leaders, but every one is under indictment of being nobody at all, or somebody else. We have list after list of battles; but each took place in several counties, or at various periods, or in the land of fable only. We have a body of surviving poetry, more than admirable in fragments and passages; but does this belong partly to a hundred years before, or wholly to three hundred years later? It is indeed admitted on all hands that the Roman legions went away, for you positively cannot find any of them in England

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now,—but the time of their departure is shifted about from end to end of a generation. We have even been warned that Britain had a continental namesake or double ganger to which—or to Bruttium—the divorcing letter of Honorius may have been directed.

Yet let us be sane and easy, for the truth will come out of clamor. We have good warrant of experience to expect that it will take the lines of old authentic tradition enlarged and corrected. It is not for nothing that mankind has its memory. Gibbon, believing in Arthur for Nennius's sake, is near the final outcome. But we desire to know much more than Gibbon, or any one in his day, could tell.

The witchery of words is in wait at the heart of the confusion, for names breed pictures, and pictures are not as adaptable as names, however the facts may vary. Mr. Coode's Lloegrian, for example, is a Teuton Romanized in feeling, habit and (partly) in blood; Mr. Pearson's Lloegrian is a Celt imperfectly tutored by Rome; Dr. Guest's Lloegrian is an out-and-out Anglo-Saxon, hating Rome and Celt with equal fervor; and the Lloegrian of other writers is a southern Celt with hardly a tatter of Rome about him, who would not join the muster and revel of Cattraeth. Now every one of these conceptions is true for some period or some area: the Lloegrian being simply, first or last, a dweller in the eastward part of Britain.

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Again, the Saxon conquest is, in Mr. Coode's conception, very little more than the comfortable absorption and education of barbarians by a resident mass of civilized people; to Dr. Guest and Dr. Freeman it is a grim and thorough slaughter for more than a hundred years; to Mr. Green it is a slow beating back, with few of the vanquished left within the victor's lines until the Severn Valley was gained; to Archdeacon Jones it is the winning of the low grounds only, the Celt remaining in the uplands even to-day; to Mr. Wright it is in the west, a comparatively harmless overrunning of a region already devastated by the Celts of Brittany; while Mr. Pearson makes it partly a matter of bargain or compromise, partly a championship of the cities against the unruly country people. In so long a contest there must have been instances of almost everything. An adequate understanding of it would include the above and much more.

In deciphering this past we must use all men's speculations for what they are worth. We must bring to bear whatever science offers us of method and of gleanings elsewhere. We must trace the antecedents of these people and the conditions surrounding them. We must compare the known doings of other men in other lands and times, where the cases are most nearly parallel. We must consult the writings of men then living, as far as they go; the greater mass of oral tradition

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first put into writing at a later time or not yet written down at all; the great book of the soil, opening very slowly, year by year, to show precisely what man was and man made use of then. It will be long indeed before any one will come equipped for such a life-work. Meanwhile, we may lay down outlines and proffer hints which ought to have some value.

The time has gone by when one might hold, with Dr. Guest, that the first man in Britain was a Celt—some few thousand years ago. There were Esquimaux in the land, no doubt, and savager, perhaps even half human, inhabitants before them. All such may have come and gone, following the ice northward or the sun southward and leaving an empty realm behind. The same thing has happened on a smaller scale in other island worlds. There are some which have been settled within sure human knowledge, the incomers finding no one to contest their sway. There are others which wait even yet for the abiding presence of man.

But Britain, even after it was geologically cut loose from the mainland, lay too near for this to be likely. Tribe would mix with tribe across the channel; shoresmen, as soon as they could float, would from time to time be driven over, or tempted, from the hollow fenland between the Rhine and the Elbe. There is also a shadowy and uncertain kind of *a posteriori* evidence. Anthropometric physiologists believe that they have

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found Mongolian and other strange elements in the outlines and measures of some rural Englishmen. To be sure, these may be no more than inherited Roman importations from the far east and far south of that empire; or even the contribution of Saxon sea-kings, who numbered, as Gibbon thought, a few adventurous Huns among their crews. Or the Ivernian conquerors, to borrow the good word of Professor Rhys, may have brought these qualities, latent by inheritance, in their veins. But, on the whole, it is perhaps not unlikely that some of these phenomena are the earlier human wave-marks imperfectly obliterated.

From this author we may cite an inference concerning Jack the Giant-Killer and other early tales, and push it a little farther than he has cared to go. For the dwarfs and the gnomes had already been similarly explained, and the Irish peasant knows very well that "the good people" are those who dwelt in Ireland before the Irish came. Popular fancy is less creative than decorative; and when it gives us heterogeneity as its report of the people of the past, we may accept heterogeneity as probably true. If they were all Ivernians together,—the great man-eaters, the squat way-layers, the tricksy, light-footed little people of the fells,—they can hardly, at any rate, have been Ivernians of similar parentage on both sides. Where they differ we may find the dim record of yet earlier conquests by the

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mighty of limb, or the shrewd and malignantly watchful, over the simple, the feeble, and the fleeing. Women have ever been preserved as a spoil in such inroads, and nature sees to it that every seemingly lost race shall live on in its conqueror's offspring. When one thinks of the tangle of human blood woven everywhere through many centuries, it is not to wonder that certain anthropologists (for example, Major Powell) deny that mankind are classifiable in races, or definitely in any way except by language and custom. Almost any extreme is better than to conceive of the Basque or Celt or Saxon as always fair-haired or always dark-haired, with equal limitation as to stature, temperament, and usage; and to carry the same unrelenting method through every other page of history.

Still we may be warranted in supposing that most Ivernians, when the Celts overtook them in Britain, were a darker and shorter race; that their heads were more often long than round; and their temperament (following an ingenious suggestion of Professor Rhys) imaginative and mirthful beyond that of their invaders. But in looking back through the mist, we hardly see them at all before they vanish from or in the new dominant race. Their legacy is a name here and there clinging to island or river, a few doubtful monuments, of which Stonehenge may be an example, a few relics from the caverns or from beneath the sod,

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and how much of English blood and English life in both hemispheres, we can never know.

Their successors are nearer to us every way and less shadowy, but we stumble along even here. In the same breath we are told that the Celt was a tall, round-headed blonde, and that the test of Celtic blood in a nominally Teutonic people is the frequency of the long skull, the short stature, the dark hair and face. Yet each statement is true in its way, the former of the typical Celt, the Celt as he began; the latter of the Celt as his own conquests had made him.

For, whether his starting-point were the Central Asian plateau or the shores of the Baltic, he reached Britain from afar, fighting and marrying *vi et armis* through many intervening lands. Just before him fragments of the Ivernians and other early folk were driven; close behind him the Teutons came crowding. Now and again they overtook and intermingled, or even thrust on ahead. So in an overlapping and confused entanglement of waves, each with its own especial compromise of aspect, language, and blood, one great rush of invasion came pouring across from the south, another (if traditions tell us truly) from the east and northeast over the German Ocean, the broad war-path of the Saxon and Viking in later days. And as Harold had to fight in the same year the Northman and the Norman, so the islander before all

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history may have had to make head at once against this swarming of taller, fairer folk upon the two most open borders of his realm. In that contest he could not win, nor was any escape open save to Ireland; and even there they followed him mightily. There was nothing for it but to die or to mingle; and as the Ivernian had darkened down to the folk whom he had found and conquered, the Celt, with like exceptions and modifications, began darkening down to him. These foremost Celts may have been Gaels, as some have thought; or both Gaels and Cymry; or people of an older tongue, which became differentiated into these languages on the island itself. The settlement must at any rate have begun in remote antiquity, for as early as the time of Strabo there was a fairly advanced population along the coast, with differences from the inland dwellers implying more than one later migration. Such, no doubt, recurred again and again, until the heavy hand of Rome was laid on the island, forbidding all change except what came with her will.

But she let in the light also; and by this and later knowledge we are able to map out the land after a fashion. Between the Thames and the Channel the most notable Caint or open upland of Britain was held by a fairly civilized race of husbandmen; probably Celts. Opposite the Armorican peninsula, the second-best crossing of the Channel, a Belgic invasion

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was filling Hampshire with Gauls, whom some have styled Germanic, but who were probably more so in sentiment and imitation than in blood. The Cateiuchlani of Hertfordshire, and perhaps also the Iceni of Norfolk, Boadicea's redoubtable tribe, have had the same repute in some quarters, it may be on account of recent half-Teuton reinforcements from beyond the sea. The eastern folk were at any rate a people of good skill in peace and war, of some wealth, some traffic, and an abundant coinage. The Coritani north of them had won in Cymric legend the name of magicians; even a little knowledge and a foreign aspect being a marvel in primitive eyes. A race of Scandinavian type, tall, brawny, red-haired "Caledonian" lovers of freedom, held the lowlands of Scotland, testing severely the ablest general and the best courage of Rome. But the dark, sturdy Silures, no doubt largely Ivernian as Tacitus thought them, were even more indomitable beyond the lower Severn. Other folk of this latter favor, long afterwards known in terror as Pechts or Picts, predominated throughout the hill country of the far north. Yet others, in the main like them, roamed the north Welsh mountains, with reflex Irish settlements already fringing their coast; or held the famous mining country of Damnonia, where some amelioration of manners (and of race) might be laid to the account of trading voyagers from

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the Orient. The midland folk were no doubt transitional, but except the childish imitations of the Yorkshire Brigantes, the farthest kingdom which undertook the work of minting coin, we have little to mark the fading out of the southeastward culture.

There in the fertile open plateaux, easy of foreign access, easier for tillage and travel, power, as well as commerce and agriculture, had its home. As with greater communities, the centre shifted, now this petty realm, now that, becoming law-giver in its turn, until dominion rested, as if in prophecy, near the site of London. Before his long eclipse, the Celt shone out at his very best in the noble little empire of Cymbelline,—Cunebelline the golden, the friend of Augustus, the darling of the gods. You may see him yet in fair relief on his own beautiful gold-pieces, borne to victory by the goddess who took the form of a brute for his sake.

Yet, wide as was the interval between the huge Caledonian of the flaming hair and the dwarfish, dark-browed Silure, between the illustrious Cunebelline and the squat savage of the northern waste, they were all Celts in their language at any rate, so far as we know. There have been fancies to the contrary, such as that of Mr. Coode, who supposes the Anglo-Saxon to have found his language awaiting him in Britain; but these remain fancies only. The greatest divergence

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of speech was probably between the Gael and the Cymro; each of these two main stems, according to Mr. Skene, being again divided into two groups of dialects, corresponding to the more familiar High German and Low German clusters. The Gael was strongest in the far north and along the western coast; but almost everywhere else yielded to his rival. The differences, already noted, of aspect and manners did not correspond with any accuracy to these differences of tongue. All considered, our variegated friend, the Ancient Briton, was much more unlike himself and out of unanimity than popular fancy pictures him.

Rome fixed those uneasy populations in their seats; added to their volume and variety; drew them partly from the heights into the valleys; gathered the quieter elements into cities; improved communication, opening many roads where few had been; and fostered in all things, where she did not compel, conformity to her own higher or more luxurious standard. So zealously was the work done, that long after her departure there yet remained the glimmer of the imperial purple, the shadow of legionary discipline, the curse of Roman debauch. These were everywhere, unless in the woods and on the wilder heaths and hills.

The Roman occupancy falls readily into three periods,—the first brutality of conquest; the long

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peaceful domination, when there was neither war or rumor of war, unless in a small way with predatory mountain tribes on the far border; and the era of decay, when incursions became frequent and disastrous, usurpers abounded, wrangling, and year by year there grew a dread upon all of being cut off alive from the living mass of men. We remember the first period by the extravagance of cruelty which it employed and provoked,—the wrongs of Boadicea and her kindred, the massacre of London. These have stirred the blood of all succeeding generations, and will stir it so long as human sympathy endures; but in the fact that there were seventy thousand immigrants to be overwhelmed by that blind retribution, besides many survivors, we may more profitably study the great change already working on British soil.

But this was the merest casual eddy of the incoming flood. The legions built their forts and planted their garrisons, and settlements grew up about them, pushing continually farther to the west and north, until in each direction a line of half-military cities—Exeter, Caerleon, Wroxeter, Chester, or Carlisle and Durham—represented very nearly the final limit of civilization.

In the open space behind them, colonies of veterans were planted; merchants and mariners of many countries gathered along the landing-places and narrow

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streets of the growing river towns; and moneyed men from the Mediterranean, the Rhine, or the Loire took up their abode on the lands newly bought or granted, building low colonnaded dwellings of open interior and mighty expansion, the like of which have never been seen in England since their day.

Yet the South European has not given up this architectural ideal even in the New World. Old Cuban or Mexican memories of its less imposing embodiments will be recalled by many a traveller. No wonder that it should have been carried unimpaired so far as the Scotch lowlands or the valleys of the Exe and the Wye.

Its hollow heart is sometimes a paved court-yard, sometimes a flower-garden. About this the rooms are built casemate-fashion, every one opening inwardly upon it and some also opening outwardly, with iron-barred windows which commonly have no glass in them. One story is the usual height at all points, except at the rear, where a second may be added. The front is often in stucco, painted gaudily.

Under the magic of Rome, the inner walls broke into marble columns or threw out long pillared porticoes for the frescoed banquet-hall or the tessellated bathing-apartments, where one would move amid appliances now forgotten and over rare designs. Fountains, shrines, and statuary, all were multiplied.

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In the later days Eastern decoration wound profusely over capital and cornice. Walls and flooring bloomed out in the beauty of early myth and childlike fancy. Bathing or dreaming or dining, the Roman had ever around him the divinely familiar figures,—Aphrodite the foam-born; Bacchus on his panther steed; Orpheus with his dumb audience enthralled by melody; Narcissus by the fountain; the frolics of the nymphs and dryads; the loves of Cupid and Psyche, of Jove and Leda,—perennial things which have become commonplaces without losing their delightfulness.

In the transfer to Britain, some few changes became necessary. Of course the heating arrangements grew more numerous and ample, though following old models generally. The needs of new settlers compelled often a gradual or partial approach to what was desired. For material they commonly used what was near at hand, with varying results. Occasionally the founder of a house began with but a single row of rooms, to which later generations added wings and other outgrowths when successively needed. Often, especially in cities, there was tearing down and rebuilding again and again on or over the same foundations. The suburban villa answered fairly to what we know by that name; but farther away the dwelling took on a more complex and self-sufficing character. It must be the centre of agricultural operations on a large scale;

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a storehouse ample enough to defy famine, large enough to be garrisoned against any predatory woodland enemy. It must even be something of a manufactory, something of a provincial capital. These requirements varied in importance with the shifting of circumstances and of years. In the underground traces brought continually to light, we find their succession hinted, and the expedients whereby such changes were met. Even the religious conversion under Constantine, though it cannot have been at all deep or thorough, has left some slight rural vestiges, if we understand them rightly, in the shrine of the nymph degraded to lucrative uses, her statue buried in *débris* where it lay overthrown. But whatever the details of their history, the greatest of these Roman-British homes, when at their best, were undoubtedly vast and imposing structures; little less than towns for area and population, or than palaces for the splendor of their appointments.

The cities were in some instances, perhaps generally, provided with the central forum of their Italian prototype, the narrow streets in part converging thereon, the public baths, the wide and lofty basilica. In this last were the merchants' exchange, the committee-rooms, the administrative offices, the great court-room, or hall of audience, with its double array of Corinthian pillars above and below the gallery. Verulam,

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whither the wealth of London may have largely resorted, was the possessor of a theatre and amphitheatre worthy of the parent land. The temple of Hercules at Calleva, the temple of the sun at Aquæ Solis, were edifices to make the burghers who dwelt about them dilate with pride.

Yet at a bird's-eye view the British cities must have differed greatly, for a reason already given. Thus, in London architecture brick predominated, while the houses of some other towns were as often of wood only, and Uriconium shone out of the western woodland in a garment of white stone and a head-dress glittering with mica.

For defence they were equipped very unequally. London grew up around a fortress, and was walled again on a much more extensive plan when danger drew near in the decline of Roman power. Calleva (Silchester) and Uriconium (Wroxeter) were probably not enclosed until a still later time. The circumvallation of Deva (Chester), Camulodunum (Colchester), and Anderida (Pevensey) may have been ample from first to last. Verulam remained quite open until her final overthrow.

But the Roman civilization of Britain was partial in area, thin and weak in personal influence, inferior nearly everywhere to the best of Gaul, and attended always by its shadow. Not only did all the mountain

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land remain wilfully or hatefully outside of it, but there is no reason to suppose that it made more than the barest lodgment in the rugged forests of the watersheds, whether midland or well down towards the eastern and southern coasts. It followed the valleys upward, it spread fan-like over the open uplands, it busied itself about the marshes and estuaries near the sea, it fringed the great wall and the watchful skirts of the southwestern garrisons, it left isles of uncertain light along the Roman and pre-Roman highways. But where the wild ox and the wild boar harbored, the refractory Briton who had no Latin nor aptitude for Latinization well might harbor too. Others of his kindred, less exacting or defiant, became the servile dependants of the conqueror, as they did again long afterwards when the Saxons came. Across the Wallbrook, within a stone's throw of the great fortress and the wealthy merchants' houses, lay the unhappy London of the Celt. Beside the splendor of Uriconium was ever a native Wrekin city tattered and wan.

It has been said that the use of the Roman tongue became all but universal. It has also been said that this use answered only to that of English in India. But the former is not possible, or the results would differ; and the latter is not possible, because of the relatively great number of the intruders and rulers. In the cleared country it is likely that Latin was almost

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universally understood, and commonly spoken after a fashion, although the more conservative elements might ignore it among themselves. In the rougher parts of the country—such as the ridges running northward and westward from near London, and the forests of Wyre and Arden and Sherwood, of Englewood and Selkirk—the knowledge would be confined to a very few besides the interpreters and the more friendly or imitative chiefs. There never was any Latin literature worth naming produced in Britain; and although in course of time a British poetry—very pathetic and very stirring—did come into being amid Roman wrecks and ruins, it was neither sung nor written in Latin, except a scrap or two here and there, and shows no more trace of Roman methods and qualities than if Virgil and Lucretius had never been.

This being the state of affairs, we can see that there would always be a Roman party and a British party in the land; the former long dominant, and associated, both by the facts and their own continual advertisement, with every kind of obvious improvement, such as we now term progress; the latter sullen and self-doubting in prosperous times, but gathering confidence with the falling away of Roman vigor, and exalting mere rudeness in the scorn of effeminate indulgence. Long before the end, it was said that there were cities in Britain where any one might be sure of a following who would

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make head on any pretext against the central power at Rome. Of the thirty provincial tyrants, in the old meaning of the word, who at one period disturbed the world-mistress, not less than seven or eight, including the two Tetricæ, have been attributed to Britain. Carausius, in seceding from the body of the empire, made the revolt for the first time national. Guarded by its moving fleets and the blue ring of sea, the island is said to have enjoyed a prophetic peace and felicity, all its own, during his seven years' sway.

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CHAPTER II.

FROM THE FIRST COMING OF THE SAXON TO THE PASSING OF ROME.

In another aspect, the episode of Carausius is epochal and significant. His opportunity came of a command and a power to punish piracy and piratical inroads. There had always, within historical limits, been navies of a sort in the narrow seas. The Veneti, afloat, were able to meet Cæsar mightily and task him well. But now a new and more formidable race of fighting-men were taking *en masse* to the water. Partly Teutonic, partly what we call Scandinavian, mingling in every degree, they put out from the whole curve of Frisian coast and from beyond its limits on either side. It was indeed the most natural thing for them to do. As they had driven the Celt quite over the border of the continent, so now a like impulsion—from the unknown East—was on them and their kindred. A people of strange aspect, hardly indeed of this world as rumor reported, was threatening to make the German of the mainland a being of the past. All the nations were in movement. Some, leaguing with the emperor, made a barely sufficient battle. Others adopted the easier expedient of falling on the ill-defended provinces themselves.

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A chance exploit showed them how vulnerable was the empire on every seaward frontier. Escaping from the Euxine in the very ships that had transported them, a body of marauding Franks lived at free quarters wherever it pleased them to land between Sicily and the Channel coast, finally returning home freighted with tales of adventure and abundant booty. All their tribal brotherhood were dazzled and stirred. The contagion spread northward, with no lessening. The Saxon, better prepared for the new *rôle*, seized on it even more eagerly and continued in it longer. Already he was by nature, and perhaps by name (it is Dr. Guest's conjecture), the Engle who loved the sea. All the northern waters were alive with those vikings. Welcoming whoever would come,—Norwegian, Frisian, Dane, Westphalian, or Easterling,—they spread sail and sped oar for the harrying of the British coast. Their war was the war of the red savage when least humankindly:—the villages in flames, the tenth prisoner tortured to a frightful death, women borne helplessly away! They were not without a certain taste and skill in ornament; a manly ring in their song that stirs the blood to-day; a hopeful outlook on life which was rightly prophetic of greater things; but as yet they could only hate the culture in which they did not share, and long ravenously for the fruits which were not of their growing. Nevertheless they had wit and

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wariness enough to make terms where good terms could be made, and would take anything very readily as a gift when that was cheaper than winning it spear in hand. The Admiral Carausius was not averse to a bargain, and paid for it by a royal outlawry.

Once at open enmity with Rome, he was almost necessarily the friend and ally of the Saxon. This, with the force at command, would insure his own frontier against depredation; but it would almost as certainly involve more or less of friendly settlement. The British harbors were too convenient to be neglected by adventurers out of food and water, or merely seeking a temporary rest among those who half feared and courted them. The spoils of other coasts were very tempting to the islander when brought in, lightly won, by men willing to part with them at a kindly figure. Once secure for the time against being appropriated whether or no, the half-Romanized beauties of the shore may have looked with more than approval on the hardy strangers, who had no thought of reclining while they dined, and whose leaders, at any rate, were commonly great of limb, ruddy and fair in the face, golden of beard and hair. Some of these latter would take service gladly in a fleet which was at once imperial in name and at war with the real emperor. Others, collectively or singly, by accident or design, would cease their roving and cast a firmer anchor.

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As we have seen already, it is not possible to indicate a time within the limits of history so early that this kind of infiltration from the eastward was not already going on. Nor can we be quite sure of fixing an end. "At the close of the last century," says the author of Mehalah, the coast of Essex about Mersey isle was "haunted by smugglers and other lawless characters. . . . A strain of wild, reckless, law-defying gypsy blood entered the veins of the marshland populations. Adventurers from the Low Countries, from France, even from Italy and Spain, originally smugglers, settled on the coast . . . married and left issue. In the plaster and oak cottages away from the sea . . . live the old East Saxon slow-moving, never-thinking day-laborers. In the tarred wreck-timber cabins by the sea, just above the reach of the tide, swarms a yeasty turbulent race of mixed-breeds." Even so late as 1889 an explorer of the Essex Archipelago has pointed out the prevalence of Dutch names and odd costumes among the Anglicized rather than English people of these Roman-walled islets. But for the distinctively Saxon settlement in its first appreciable beginning, we may look to the time of Carausius.

Yet it cannot have been more than a tattered fringing of the more tempting or exposed frontier; melting indistinguishably, for the most part before long, into the mass of shore-line population. For the insular

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rule, even with the extension of Allectus, endured only ten years; and then Rome was paramount again, exclusive as before. But perhaps the example of Carausius had some effect even on Constantine, the son of the conquering general, who really won the Roman purple instead of a barren ambition and an insular sovereignity. There is no reason to doubt that he held the borders firmly, and the chief changes which he wrought for the island must have been in religious and national feeling and in southward emigration. If not a Briton by birth, as was afterwards feigned, Constantine the Great was identified with Britain by life-long residence. Britons felt like world-wide conquerors when he became emperor at Rome. So deeply was the popular imagination stirred that, as we shall see, his name alone, recurring at a critical period, was enough to win for an obscure soldier the empire of Britain, Gaul, and Spain, and, perhaps, to found a dynasty which lingered on into the second century of the Saxon conquest.

If many volunteers went southward in his train, or families of the Romanizing party followed him to the world-capital, this was not the first depletion of the island due to Rome. From an early period of conquest armies had been recruited there to fight in remote countries. In part, these conscriptions may have lessened the Roman and other recent elements. But the reduction of British blood, in the pre-Roman sense,

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was no doubt the general result. For every reason, soldiers would be taken by preference from among the more redoubtable and intractable tribes. When these were no longer to be come by in sufficient numbers, the quiet peasantry and townspeople must furnish their quota. And when Celtic men were withdrawn and Celtic women remained, the latter would often make Hobson's choice of foreigners.

It was a rather comically wide choice in certain cases. Spaniards, Dalmatians, Burgundians, Indians, Scythians, Syrians, Gauls, and Moors! Hardly any people of the accessible world, however unrelated or uncouth, but was required to aid in defending Britain—and providing her future sons. The infusion of foreign military blood must at times have been very great; as when Agricola and his legions overcame the independence of North Britain, or Severus trampled it down a second time with armies out of which he lost fifty thousand men; or when Hadrian so immensely strengthened the northern defences. There can seldom have been less than twenty thousand legionaries and auxiliaries on the island at once between the year 50 and the year 400. To calculate their possible progeny in successive generations would be like reckoning the sands of the sea-shore.

But of course the effect was not equal, nor nearly equal, everywhere. The mountain tribes and the ruder

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woodland people felt it briefly or not at all. In the midland cities and cultivated valleys it was slight and occasional, as troops for some special purpose were moved hither and thither. In the towns known significantly as "of the legions;" in London, which took the legionary name Augusta; in York, long the military and civil head-quarters, it was necessarily great, though not necessarily predominant. But it was greater than anywhere else along the line of the wall which corresponded nearly to the modern frontier of England and Scotland, along that of the lesser and later one crossing the island from the Firth of Forth to that of Clyde, and in parts of the intervening country, the Scotch lowlands. In parts, but not in all, for remnants of the old Caledonians and Mætæ, variously modified, lingered in some places,—perhaps fastnesses like the Lammermoors and the Pentland hills,—and under the name of Attacotti were ready on occasion to become the most ferocious of all the northern foes. But their more than usual formidableness may imply that they had some benefit of legionary example and foreign blood. The Spaniard of the New World found his one unconquerable enemy in the Araucanian whose tactics were like his own, and that enemy became vindictive beyond example whenever he was partly a Spaniard too. Insurrections of such as these, and incursions in force from the northward now and then, left the lesser wall and

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its dependencies an outlying breakwater insulated in a hostile sea. There were no such experiences for the main wall until the time of Theodosius, although threateners might lurk in the rough country of the Brigantes all the way southward to the Peak of Derbyshire and the later kingdom of Elmet. Here at the north were strongholds by the dozen, the fortified military cities, and about four-fifths of the entire army. The newly-arriving legionaries or auxiliaries found themselves in a garrison population, the descendants of the descendants of soldiers inwoven in every degree, sharing the time-consecrated tradition of obedience, fidelity, vigilance, and daring; the imperial eagle which had flown afar but was always the same; the tongue of civilization whereby the Rhone, the Danube, and the Jordan might converse and be as one. The complex daughters of the land bore them a more complicated martial offspring. When they departed they left the better part of themselves behind. Even after the entire withdrawal of the Romans and all who followed them, there remained a strenuous power of resistance. Of the four great terminal fortresses, one may have fallen early, but a second held out for a hundred and fifty years, to fall in the great slaughter of Catraeth; a third maintained its independence, except for one brief interval, during four centuries, and the last became the capital of a free Roman-

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British kingdom of equal duration. Undoubtedly there was here a great reinforcement by Celtic valor. But we know that in civil war the Roman party of the north proved strong enough to overthrow its opponents; and the tenacity of Strathclyde must be ascribed in part to the far-descended sons of the legions.

There was another and very different border where similar causes produced similar effects, although less in degree, because their duration was less. The Pict had always made war at the north, but we have seen when the Saxon began. In the second century there was no need to garrison, unless very slightly, the eastern and southern coast; but from the time of Carausius, or a little before, such need had become evident, and kept increasing. About the middle of the fourth century the Saxons, Picts, and Scots for the first time (it seems) began acting in combination, the island being simultaneously assailed from almost every quarter. When Theodosius landed, coming to the rescue, the open country of Kent was in the hands of barbarians, who were driving their prisoners to be sold like cattle. These must surely have been Saxons, for the points of assault of the other hostile peoples were far away. He defeated them between Richborough and London; and afterwards relieved the anxious midland towns, hurrying the Picts northward and the Scots into their native island

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again. So runs the historical tale, but this cannot be taken without exception. There were Scots in great number after his time on the western coast of Britain, and the Saxons, also said to have been expelled, must have left some residuum along the shore, to which by partial occupancy and continual annoyance they gave their name.

The danger had been too imminent for easy recurrence. Theodosius made the shell of the island harder everywhere, that the enemy might not again break in. The territory between the walls was definitely reoccupied, the Attacotti were conscripted by wholesale to serve abroad, and the Count of the Saxon shore found himself in possession of a chain of fortresses, well manned, which might save him from the fate of his predecessor, Nectarides, whom the freebooters had slain. During the next forty years they proved sufficient, and we may suppose, with Dr. Guest, the development there of just such a soldierly people as I have described along the northern wall.

Only we cannot think of it as a continued belt following the coast. The forts were not connected in any way, and the settlement surrounding each depended on it alone. We have seen that an enemy was quite able to overrun the country between London and its fortified Channel port. No doubt they had entered where Rochester and Richborough left an intervening gap,

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or through some similar gate of access. The Saxon shore was well calculated for a long struggle in detail against fate, but, like a string of gems (hard enough one by one), it did not hold firmly together.

And before very long there was a great depletion. The legions of the island followed Maximus back towards Rome, as they had followed the first Constantine. But now the throng of native volunteers became alarming. Not only was the prestige of that earlier success with him, but to the half-Romanized Britons he was a more than half-Britonized Roman. Led by a dream, as the bards and story-tellers were fond of averring, he had come from afar to win a British princess for his bride. Even the all but independent mountain kings laid claim to him as kinsman by marriage. Later the story ran that their ample reinforcements won for him the victory; however this may be, it is certain that his great withdrawal of British forces bore the blame in after-years for many calamities. It must have been a movement *en masse* of the fighting males, and the most martial districts would suffer most. Some of course remained, and many more, no doubt, came back to their homes, but the legends may be right in peopling foreign lands at the expense of the isle, and singling out Armorica as the one which profited most largely. The matrimonial army of young women sent after them may

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or may not have any claims on our belief. The same expedient on a lesser scale was certainly resorted to in Elizabeth's day. But this fiction, if such it were, at least recognized that element in the episode of conquest which made it an evil and a menace for the future. The same may be said of that savager tale which deals with their treatment of Breton wives. They were a host of marrying men, and their departure was the withdrawal not only of one great army in the present, but also of innumerable armies like them, potentially existent, yet never really to be.

Time passed, and the empire was in feeble hands again; and the barbarians were swarming in as before. Stilicho, the last Roman general worthy of the name, repeated the exploit of Theodosius, though with a smaller force, the peril being less urgent. The land was cleared once more of naked painted people and allied seafaring marauders. But it was rather a gasp for fresh air than a real breathing spell. The cloud settled again upon Britain. Franks and Vandals and Sueves were threatening to sweep away the line of retreat and leave both legionaries and Roman citizens together far from the central life of their race. An exodus to the continent set in. For a generation or two the wealthier provincials had been gathering in the towns, where the walls gave protection, and the theatre, the baths, and the forum aided the illusion

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that after all nothing was quite so real and abiding as the luxury of Rome. Now, the same impulse carried them another stage. As the Saxon shoreman, the northern borderer, and the Welsh fighting-man had gone southward after glory, so almost in their wake went the voluptuary of the towns for a little longer lease of Fool's Paradise. And whatever he could carry went with him; what he could not carry, he put as far as might be under ground.

The soldiery, not what they had been, took the alarm, rose in mutiny, set up and pulled down first one puppet, then another, as uncertain whence salvation could come. At last they found hope in a name, and the second Constantine had the wit to begin by proving himself really a leader. At their head he swept back the Picts over the northern wall, then transported his forces to the continent after greater things. Many of the youth went with him besides those regularly enrolled, and again the belts and islands of semi-military population must have been the heaviest losers. Fortune favored him still further in the repulse of the assailants from beyond the Rhine, and yet more in the acquisition of Gaul and Spain. His son Constans, taken from a cloister, was made Cæsar. He had fair hopes of uniting the western empire under him. But neither he nor any other Roman ever sought to win again the

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island he had deserted. Its final separation in a military sense dates from this withdrawal of the imperial army about A.D. 408. A legion may possibly have returned long after, to aid in holding the frontiers. But probably this was not so; and in any event the time had gone by when such a reinforcement could turn the current of history. Still there was no immediate declaration of independence. A calm of surprise and pleasure must have settled for the moment upon Britain. The Picts, humbled by their recent experience, were taking counsel together before descending again from their upland homes. The Saxons can hardly yet have heard of their opportunity. The more southern foes, who were to have seized the lines of communication, had been driven far away. The late panic may have begun to seem a little ridiculous.

Yet the provincials were not sleeping unguarded. The most careless commander—and Constantine had not shown himself to be such—would hardly withdraw all the regular forces, and make no provision whatever against what must follow. The most feeble and fatuous population would contrive to put some watchmen in its fortresses. A militia of this sort would almost necessarily be formed on the Roman model.

There is indeed positive evidence of such organization. Gildas represents the Roman soldiery on the

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eve of departure as furnishing patterns of their arms, aiding the islanders in the work of fortification, and exhorting them to "valiantly protect their country." The ancient poems in the book of Taliessin and the Black Book of Caermarthen repeatedly mention the "nine hundred horse" which went regularly as auxiliaries with a Roman legion. These figure as attendant on Cunedda; also as obeying the "commanders" Bedwin and Bridlaw. Again the sixty centuria are mentioned as holding the wall. Finally, we are told in plain terms of "the legion for the benefit of the country," and of "the loricated legion" from which "arose the Guledig" Arthur. Also at the south we hear of Ambrosius opposing Roman discipline to the onslaught of Cerdic; and the Britons of Banbury, under Aurelius Conan, are believed to have adopted Roman formation and strategy without avail. The standards also were Roman: witness the eagle unearthed at Silchester and "the dragon of the great Pendragonship." In all this, revival is so much less likely than survival that we have good warrant for assuming the latter.

No doubt the Roman defensive organization would be continued also in its larger features. A Count of the Saxon Shore there still must be, though perhaps under another name, giving some unity, some chance of concerted action to the garrisons along that coast.

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Also a Count of Britain in the west, where were turbulent mountaineers and Irish inroads. Above all, in the north a Duke of Britain with a preponderance of command that almost involved supremacy. For here the great danger lay. Afterwards, with other titles, men called him the Gosgordd of the wall.

The calm did not last. Within two years the return of alarm brought the recurrence of revolution. Constantine's power had begun to fall apart already. Gerontius, his best general, revolted against the revolter, and hounded the barbarians on to their prey, not sparing Britain, his native soil. It was rumored through the province that all the pirates were coming back again, and the naked, painted savages from the half-frozen land. Urgent appeals were sent to Honorius; but the worthless idler of Ravenna, who would hardly bestir himself on behalf of the Eternal City, had no good words for subjects far away. He answered, if at all, that they might shift for themselves; and they did —shifting his functionaries also. Nennius would seem to imply that violence was offered to these, but his meaning is not clear. They were driven away at the least, and the more odious offices ended then and there. Others undoubtedly survived, with a change of incumbents, for, as Mr. Pearson and Mr. Coode have pointed out, they are in the municipal constitution of English towns to this day.

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We may go a step or two farther, not wholly conjectural. The military commanders, having already been changed by the withdrawal of Constantine, would be quite out of the upheaval. Procopius, quoted by Mr. Skene, declares that the kingly power did not lapse, but that the island remained subject to tyrants. By space and much besides this writer was nearly as far removed from that chapter of contemporary history as we are to-day. But so salient a fact would make its impression, and we may give ear to it as at least likely.

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CHAPTER III.

FROM CUNEDDA TO VORTIGERN.

PROFESSOR RHYS offers a novel theory of dual control, with the north in the hands of Cunedda Wledig, the south in those of Ambrosius Aurelianus, Count of the Saxon Shore. Each of these men bore an imperial title and held a great command; but unhappily they were not contemporaries, the great Ambrose being slain about one hundred years later. Moreover, the disparity of power would have been fatal to the independence of the southeast. Besides, York had been for long the capital of Britain. Generals had twice gone forth from it, conquering even Rome. The purple belonged there in a special sense. A great measure of provincial license might be looked for, but probably there was at least the nominal recognition of unity in the nation and in the governing power.

Was Cunedda the first ruler of free Britain? There is no other figure which stands out so prominently from that canvas; but this is all any one can say. Mr. Stephens has thought his existence at the time open to question, basing the doubt on a poem of Taliessin, who therein professes to have known him in the sixth cen-

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tury. But the balance of evidence inclines the other way.

Whatever his personality, he could be nothing less than emperor if he were to claim general obedience. Not that the title subsisted literally. It was translated into the Cymric language, and so lived on. Thus Maximus the emperor became the Maxen Wledig of Welsh story. Ambrose was Embres Guledig. Arthur and Cunedda each bore Guledig with his name. The Guledig or Wledig was emphatically what the imperator began by being, a general-in-chief, a king of war over warlike kings. He wore the imperial purple. It was the continuation of the same office.

But this was not the only form in which the title survived. The Romanizing party were not wholly content with Cymric sounds in such a case. Their spokesman, Gildas, converts both emperor and Guledig into Aurelius or Aurelianus. Thus we have Ambrosius Aurelianus, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Aurelius Conan, the latter being to the Welshman Cynan Guledig. There can be no doubt of the equivalency.

In all likelihood this first British sovereign was of the northern soldier-land between Stirling and Carlisle. Being in command from before the Roman withdrawal, he must have been at least partly Roman in feeling, if not in blood. He was threatened from several quarters at once by a bewildering variety of enemies, and under

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the jealous watch of an opposition that grew stronger continually. It was the place for a great genius; but, failing genius, he must go, as he went, to the wall.

The Pict was his greatest foe; and next the aquatic Irishman then called the Scot; and then the sea-faring Dane-Dutchman called Saxon. To these have been conjecturally added the Welsh mountain-tribes and the Armorican immigrants. Behind these last was another danger, which no modern historian has noticed, though Nennius states it plainly. But it could not be felt as yet. Let us consider these elements of the problem in the order given.

Who were the Picts? The Brithwr, the Britons; primarily, the painted people; secondarily, the mixed people; in every way the most authentic and only unconquered representatives of the island as it was before the Romans came. But so utterly had this been lost sight of, that to Gildas they were a "foreign nation" of "villanous faces" and very little decency. Now, Gildas is the champion abuser of all men except the men of Christian Rome; but in this instance he has some reason. We ought to sympathize, maybe, with the free and daring Brithwr; but sympathy is not easy with wild irrational people who prefer to go naked and to look like cannibals. Yet in that northern climate this can hardly have been their invariable array. They formed alliances with the

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Saxons,—hardly introducing nudity into diplomacy. They kept spies regularly in the enemy's camp, who assuredly wore clothing. They received and enrolled deserters, even Romans, of course without requiring them to undress and freeze. In quieter moments they learned something of convention, something of civility, from their hated but more enlightened neighbor. They spoke an old language comparing with Scotch Gaelic as the Welsh compares with the Cornish; "a cultured or literary language" in the time of Bede, which is supposed to have been brought in the fifth century, or not much later, "under the trammels of written forms." Perhaps, after all, they went bare only in circumstances of great excitement, as the Quaker matrons once did, or the Comanche, furiously happy, who loved to take the war-path clad in nothing but a blotch of war-paint and an unearthly yell.

In their general designation, as in the earlier one of Caledonians (Woodlanders), many varying tribes must have been included. They derived something, no doubt, as they are known to have done afterwards, from each people along their borders,—from the Scot, whom Gildas describes as "differing in manners," though he is careful to convey no compliment; from the Teuton, or Scandinavian, prowling and settling along the eastern coast; from the heterogeneous assemblage of auxiliaries along the wall. Here, too, in descendants

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were the more intractable of the tall ruddy folk whom Tacitus took note of centuries before; and here the strongly-, squarely-built people who have left a deeper mark on tradition. The Pict of the Highland peasant is not at all the tattooed gentleman who figures so nobly in the illustrations of Sir Walter Raleigh's Roanoke narrator. But all difficulties vanish when you think of them as a loosely-organized assemblage of tribes, with, it may be, little in common except their substitution of paint for clothing, or their rapacious hostility, and some peculiarities of arms,—for one thing, "the hooked weapons," wherewith, according to the ridiculous old tale, they pulled down from the wall its "useless" garrison which "slumbered" although "panic-stricken." But it is not likely that Gildas invented this contrivance altogether.

The Scots, we are told, came "from the northwest," and this may imply either an attack on the region between the walls, or a descent in the neighborhood of Anglesey, or penetration into the lowland of Britain through the heart of the Welsh Mountains. Already they had settlements in Galloway and North Wales, and these must have been enlarged while others were formed along the more southerly coast; but no large city seems to have been attempted, no rich agricultural country laid waste, unless it were near the western sea. The scourge fell on the ruder

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part of the island only, and can never by itself have been a great danger, one would say.

The eastern sea-kings we have briefly considered already. Much has been made of a supposed three-fold tribal division, and ingenuity has been exerted in finding recondite meanings for the *three* ships of Hengist, and the three hundred thousand men who incredibly followed him. But all were confused, and there can have been little real distinction. Ethelward's Chronicle indeed mentions their migration (as reported) "from the three provinces of Germany which are said to have been the most distinguished, namely, from Saxony, Anglia, and Giota." But a few lines further on we read, "Britain, therefore, is now called Anglia (England) because it took the name of its conquerors; for their leaders aforesaid were the first who came thence to Britain, namely, *Hengist and Horsa.*" Now, Hengist and Horsa, by all other accounts, landed with the Jutes in Kent, and Ethelward himself elsewhere mentions Wipped's-fleet as the precise spot, while also saying that "the Cantuarians derived their origin from the Giotæ." Either Hengist and Horsa were Angles who sometimes led Jutes, or our chronicler is hopelessly at sea with regard to any real difference between the tribes.

In other places Ethelward calls the people of Essex the Orientales *Angli;* and this in reference to the time of Sigebert or Sæbert. Again and again he applies

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the name Western Angles to the people who made Wessex. We know on other authority that Cerdic, the first great leader of the latter, drew more than once reinforcements from the Jutes of Kent, and that the South Saxons also contributed. Again, Nennius declares that the sons of Hengist, who must have been Jutish if he were so, occupied "many regions, even to the Pictish confines," a northern neighborhood hitherto given over to the Angles. Also in this quarter we meet with the Frisian Sea. But again, Nennius speaks of the "elders of the Angle race" who "attended" Hengist, seemingly in Thanet. As for Gildas, he ignores the Angle and Jute altogether, although he must have known of the early conquest near London, and although he refers to the traditional invitation of Vortigen, and perhaps also the wasting of the north nearly from sea to sea.

After a century and a quarter of invasion, he has but one name, though many epithets, for these eastern invaders,—"the fierce and impious Saxons,—doggish, —wolfish,—bastard born,—a race hateful both to God and men!" Oddly enough, the northern Gael, the Welshman, and the Irish have agreed to continue the same general designation, though it was long indeed before they could come in contact with the people of Essex, Sussex, Wessex, or Middlesex. Nor is there in Gildas, or other early British writers, any indication

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of such a difference among the sea-folk as he takes note of between the Picts and Scots, though the latter were so much farther away. Everything goes to show that there was practical identity everywhere; or, which is more likely, such intermixture as would prevent distinction on territorial lines.

Turning again to Ethelward, we find Sleswig stated as the Anglian capital, and the very direct implication that the Jutes dwelt farther north, while the Saxons were more southerly. Our annalist is very cautious though. He tells us what "is said to have been;" he writes "in the confusion of the times;" he frankly admits his ignorance of the king "near the Jupiterean Mountains" who had married the aunt of his patroness; and we can take him only as proving the belief of tenth-century England. This understood a large part of the Danish peninsula to be German territory; gave precedence and predominance in migration to the people of the three provinces particularly named; but supposed that "a large multitude joined" the settlers under Hengist "from *every province* of Germany."

This bears out, in part, so far as it goes, the theory of Mr. Seebohm, and also the more recent one of Mr. Du Chaillu, both of which have met with a rather vehement but inconclusive response from Dr. Freeman in the *Contemporary Review*. The writer first named finds the three-field system of culture prevalent in

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early England; but notes its "conspicuous absence" from Northern Germany, the home of the Angle. Turning southward, he avers that "it undoubtedly existed" in "those districts of Middle Germany reaching from Westphalia to Thuringia." He thinks it at least possible that the invaders of England may have proceeded thence rather than from the regions on the northern coast."

Dr. Freeman cries out against the sacrilege of reducing history to the level of manure-distribution, or, worse still, making it a mere appendage thereto. But he can find no wiser reply than that "our ancestors" would have had sense enough to change their methods when changes were needed. Now, would they? The most emancipated people do not easily discard inherited habit, even in trifles. The English horsewoman sits her horse on the left side for the good original reason that (in a country which guides left) it is plainly the side of safety. In America, where the rule is "turn to the right," the conditions are reversed, the fair rider's limbs and habit incurring all the danger from every passing vehicle. Yet, with annual loss of life, the senseless survival continues. Customs may change, no doubt, but we naturally assume the contrary until the change be proven. When it does occur, it is often the result of imitation. Out of a mixed multitude of settlers, with various and inconsistent methods, the

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fittest plan for their new conditions will generally in the end prevail. We need no more assume that the "Saxons" who invaded Britain were all Thuringians than that there were no Thuringians among them.

Mr. Du Chaillu's contention is not at all a new one, unless in the extremeness of its claim. The evidence of language may be set against it. But that is no reliable test. Negroes are not Englishmen nor Teutons of any sort; but in the Southern States they commonly speak English only. Mr. Stuart-Glennie assures us that the Scottish kingdom was mainly Celtic; and the blood of the Celt may preponderate within its ancient boundaries to-day; yet nowhere else has the Anglo-Saxon tongue been preserved so nearly. In all north-eastern England the Danes and the Northmen have left their great limbs and their most distinctive features of personal aspect for an inheritance, and we know that their blood prevails where they were most plenty; but what Englishman is born to speak Danish or Norwegian now? One can only say that there must have been many Teutons in the first great onslaught from the east, and that there may have been many Celts and Scandinavians too.

It has been said, and repeated by Mr. Sharon Turner, writing long ago, that the Saxons were very careful while on the continent to preserve the purity of their race. But this can never have been true of more

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than certain classes in certain tribes. A like statement might be made of one Indian remnant which will not intermarry with "colored people," but would mislead if applied generally. Such scruples did not survive the invasion, for even Hengist was glad to secure a British son-in-law; Ida took a British wife, and less conspicuous instances must have been common from the beginning. We cannot reasonably doubt that the foreigners who came pouring into the eastern and southern coast of the island during the fifth century were already modified in every conceivable degree by their conquests and interminglings on the mainland. We think, in the main truly, of Saxons and their fellow-marauders as mighty blondes, but there may well have been dark eyes and thin, eager faces in the throng that forced the passage of the Cray, and Roman noses and brows in the storming of Anderida.

Beyond this, their inevitable method of approach, and their peculiar habit of warfare, would insure a different kind of intermingling. In all ages, and among all peoples, a ship of war is cosmopolitan. Seamen belong here or there, but they belong more than all else to the realm of many borders, the ever-flowing sea. It calls them, and they are ready to ship again wherever found. Brownell, in a spirited battle-piece, shows us the New Englander, the Virginian, the dweller by the Mississippi, "the blue eyes from turfy

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Shannon, black orbs from palmy Niger," all manning the batteries of the flag-ship "Hartford" as she comes rushing on the iron-clad "Tennessee." He was there. And no doubt a far larger list might be made on any one of the great naval monsters now afloat. But the pirate, the unbiassed and uncontrollable sea-king, who wars for plunder, and against anybody, and all the time, is sure of a much more motley crew. Adventurers gather to him from every quarter. So they be callous, rapacious, and daring, they may be what else they will. And although the westward movement of the sea-faring Teutons ended in migration, it began in piracy.

There are indeed these two stages in their part of fifth-century history. When we first meet them, they are vikings on a foray. Later, as local names show, they are settlers who have brought their households and become good people of the land, kin and kin together. There is no precise line to be drawn, and there may have been something of the second in the earlier stage from near the beginning. But in the time of which I now write, the first three or four decades of British independence, the Saxons and Angles must have been for the most part very mixed free-booters, descending here and there on the coast, and aiding each other only as caprice dictated. Something of their own blood was all along the Saxon Shore, but probably no longer able or willing to aid. In Valencia, between

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the walls, it may have been different. The remnant of the Attacotti may have been in arms; the Picts, by making a slight detour in their curraghs at sea, could easily join them; and we may look to this ill-guarded region as the most probable quarter for early Anglo-Saxon settlement. Says Goeffrey of Monmouth, "Scotland . . . being in itself a frightful place to live in and wholly uninhabited, had been a safe retreat for strangers. By its situation it lay open to the Picts Scots, Dacians, Danes, Norwegians, and others that came to plunder the island." The statement has a traditional sound, if not wholly accurate; it is made of a time not very much later; and in substance he repeats it.

As to native British outbreaks in what we now call England and Wales, we have nothing reliable to go upon. Mr. Pearson puts in evidence the skulls found in Uriconium. But British citizens were certainly killed there, and there is reason to believe that the army of Ceawlin, which presumably slew them, included many individuals of Celtic or even pre-Celtic type. We need not suppose any earlier destruction. We are informed by a note of the same author that there is a tradition of the firing of Cirencester (Corineum) by sparrows having matches tied to them, which the "native tribes" let fly to the thatched roofs over the wall. But this is only a repetition of the tale

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told at Calleva and elsewhere, with the Saxons for the authors of the stratagem; and we know from the Saxon Chronicles that Cirencester remained unconquered until the last quarter of the succeeding century. Native princes, with some shadow of power, may (as some think) have held court at Glevum and Anderida all through the Roman period. No doubt they and others would be tempted by the opportunity now open. The old Gaelic settlements along the coast of Wales would naturally bestir themselves occasionally at sight of the Scottish fleets. There may even have been risings to the south of the wall in aid of the Brithwr. But no such movements can have accomplished anything great, or we should have heard of them at least faintly.

There *was* in some sense an invasion at this period from the south. Its character remains to be considered. It may have begun with the appeal to Honorius. The cry for help which could reach Italy would not fail to be heard by every Briton in Gaul. The legions of Constantine, though broken, would be in sympathy with revolt against his conqueror, and many stragglers from them would soon begin streaming over the channel to an asylum which was made safe and sure by a common need. Very likely some of their leaders would go with them. One tradition even brings back a son of the second Constantine, to win for a time the empire of Britain and found a long-enduring dynasty

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in Devon. In Gildas's time a Constantine of Damnonia was certainly powerful. Dr. Guest, a great authority, who accepts him as lineally the third of that name, has been at some pains in working out a conjectural family-tree for this line. But we may tread more safely in the broad path of what must have been.

We know that Armorica, which had been one with the neighboring part of Britain ever since the days of the Belgæ, followed the islanders into rebellion against Rome. We know that it lay in one of the main routes of transit. We have reason to believe that movements *en masse* back and forth were growing more frequent than they ever had been during several centuries. We hear fantastically through romancers of great military expeditions, either way alternately. Likewise, by the monkish narratives it would seem that either shore took in hand the work, turn and turn about, of evangelizing the other. Finally, we discover an historical Riothamus, a chieftain of the island, making his turbulent ten thousand conspicuous on the banks of the Loire.

For, indeed, in Gaul disorder was the order of the day. Fragments of Roman power, fragments of sedition, fragments of barbaric invasion, all were confusedly tossing together. In one last rally of the central power, Breton independence went down. Rome could not save herself, but she could make Armorica desolate. The hordes which crowded upon her could and would

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do so even more effectively. Billows of fire scorched out of being so much of Britain as lay south of the narrow sea. Her halls and towers were left in ruin; her people in great numbers sought the main body of their kindred. Centuries were required to restore imperfectly what had been wasted.

This movement is considered by Mr. Wright a savagely hostile invasion. He believes that these Bretons destroyed Uriconium and settled in the region around it as the ancestors of the modern Welsh. But how did they overleap the coast country, where a more nearly allied idiom, not transitional, has been spoken until lately? And if they sailed around Cornwall and up the Severn, why were they more kind to Glevum and its sister cities than to the bright town by the Wrekin? Yet these lived and prospered until long after, when Ceawlin came. On this hypothesis we can form no reasonable idea of them or their campaigns.

It is easier to suppose that these exiles were a little like other human beings. Perhaps they came by degrees and were lost in the mass of the people. It may be that their presence was mainly felt in putting forward Celtic or anti-Romanizing candidates for the purple. Possibly, too, they aided in furthering a pagan reaction.

Rome herself may have stimulated both these movements by her spasm of self-assertion. When the

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islander saw the threatening of the eagle beyond the channel, and listened to the tale of guests who had felt the talons already, he may well have wondered if his own chastisement were not near. Perhaps it may be a straining of the words of Nennius to explain the "dread of the Romans" in this way; but the dread must have been real, nevertheless, though not for very long. And we can well understand that many might find a savor of patriotism in un-Roman manners and a return to pre-Christian faith.

No doubt there had always been an opposition to both. Archdeacon W. Basil Jones has called attention to evidences of pagan survival in Britain and Gaul, particularly a temple of the latter wherein the worship of a heathen deity apparently continued until the end of Rome. Gildas mentions the grim "gods of our country" as yet standing even in the second half of the fifth century at their neglected shrines. It is not surprising to hear through another channel that the Druids came back to Mona for a time. Something of the old wildwood faith, something of the transplanted southern Jove-worship, may have been hopefully astir.

The fascination of mystery hangs about all the elements of the life of man in those forsaken days; and over none more than the beliefs and sentiments which are called religion. We can feel that a tumultuous con-

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flict was going on; but we can see little. With an apostolic ardor, a few men seem to have flung themselves into battle against the host of darkness, and later ages believed that they wrought miracles. The statelier and more mundane churchmen probably gave their knowledge and sagacity towards keeping the ship of state trim and before the wind. Thus the cloud opens a moment, showing St. Germain and his disciples driving off an army of heathen plunderers in panic by the mighty outcry of their faith; while Geoffrey sets Guitolinus before us as the spiritual and temporal father of his country,—a king-maker above all. This half-compiler, half-romancer is given to playing at parlor magic with a name and its fanciful suggestions. The Guitolin of Nennius (barely mentioned) must needs be fitted into some part having to do with discords in Britain;—why not that of the priestly Warwick of the day? Yet, others being open, it is likely this choice was determined by some legendary preparation of the public mind.

But with all their advantage of zeal, of knowledge, and of position, it is probable that the men who stood for Christ in the main were losing ground. The set of the time was against them. As an establishment lingering over from profligate days, their members may here and there have lain open to indictment. A reaction towards Celtic simplicity would make the most

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of their self-indulgence and connivances. For opposite reasons, a brutal chieftain and his followers would revolt from the hot, plain words of the evangelist. Finally, the defeat of the Roman-British fighting-men at the north told heavily against the Christians. One field may have been divinely granted them, but it was very evident that no abiding miracle held back the heathen. The party with which they were identified suffered blow after blow, and finally was superseded altogether. Then there must have followed a time of great uncertainty in creed and life. There is temptation to linger in these shadows between twilight and twilight. How was it that men lived then; and what like were they? The great cities of the land were untouched as yet, and threatened, if at all, very distantly. The Roman shell in each instance was all there yet. The Roman body, shrunken at first, had filled out again in a measure by the inpouring from Gaul and the gathering of the country. Weaker elements had been rubbed away in part. Men had been startled at least a little out of effeminacy. The Celtic memories were modifying the habits of later Rome. The religious reformer and social reformer, though often jarring, were yet at work together.

The citizen went as of old to loiter at the public bath, but he had somewhat more to talk about and think

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about than before. He sent his son to serve in arms, but no longer as an exile, from whom he might never hear again. He aided in walling his city, crudely but massively, and took (for he widened her defensive area) an increasing pride in her populousness. He dined, Roman-fashion, in larger apartments than those of his forefathers, and he made repairs in them, not over-tasteful. He spoke Latin, but with more and more of Celtic debasement, and knew at least one or two of the native island tongues. He had a few books, no doubt, in manuscript, but was falling out of the way of caring for or preserving them. He took part in the conferences at the basilica, and gave his vote for the petition of some subject territory, or against yielding to the pretensions of some growing princelet of the hills and moors, or to complete a league offensive and defensive with a bevy of friendly towns. When there was rumor of disturbance, he took his spear and went with his acquaintances to garrison the wall. In quiet times, and they were oftenest, he carried on his accustomed business in the accustomed way, using the familiar means and lines of transit. Gold and silver were sometimes in circulation, sometimes not, and values gradually accommodated themselves to the latter condition, brass coins being made to do most of the work, but very greatly increased in volume. For this new mintage old devices were used; some-

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times, very naturally, those of elder British "tyrants" who had withstood Rome. It is likely that these were struck in different cities, for we find the latter retaining even in Saxon times the right of individual issue, which, Mr. Pearson holds, can have arisen in this curious interval only.

Such is perhaps as good an account as we can now give of the life of an urban Briton in Silchester or Cirencester or Lenborough, then still bearing their Roman names. Farther north, of course there would be more disquiet, more alarm; and perhaps this would everywhere be true of the isolated villas, where such were still in occupancy. Serfs no doubt were growing self-assertive, restive, hard to control. Some were joining the retinues of half-wild chiefs, and must thereafter be fed by exaction or foray. Private feuds were on the increase. Even the plain husbandman, though relieved of some burdens, could not bring himself to work as diligently as of old. A sense of expectancy, colored dark or bright by predilection, was on all. This was aggravated or quieted by the changing military situation, but on the whole grew apace.

The first assault of the barbarians probably overcame most of the outlying fortified settlements beyond the Firth of Forth, although we may reasonably picture an Aberdeen or Inverness holding out for a

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long time, beyond rescue and nearly beyond memory, —as indeed happened not long ago in the Soudan. Gildas, following a long and vague tradition, declares that the whole region was occupied by the invaders, as far as "the wall," which Ethelward interprets "the wall of Severus." But the more northern line of defence can hardly have fallen at once. Probably it was outflanked on each side, and remained a reef, with a bit of crag at either end, in the lapping and raging (front and rear) of that wild human sea. The British commander (whether Cunedda or another) could not save it, could not even hold his ground along the southern line. All Valentia, between the walls, lay dismally at choice between the devil of savagery and the real ocean, and when the warders were dragged from the wall and the enemy poured, slaughtering, over and through, the condition of the next province became nearly the same. Probably there were many Saxon free lances among the marauders, for a foreign writer of the next decade or so mentions the "provinces of Britain" as already subject to that people. Modern investigation has unearthed near Carlisle the relics of this great foray,— the charred timbers of the old Roman station at Maryport, the skeletons of men, in their last refuge, who fought perhaps from street to street and from room to room during the sacking and burning of

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Ribchester. Possibly it was this same inroad which first drove the unhappy provincials of Yorkshire, with their short-horned herds and their enamelled jewelry, to seek a dismal refuge in the cliff-caverns of King's Scaur, fifteen hundred feet above the sea.

There is said to have been a new appeal to Rome, in spite of the long estrangement; but it effected nothing. And now the Celtic element of the West came forward to supremacy. The North, worn out with ill fortune, gave way; and the purple rested on the shoulders of Guorthegirn or Vortigern, prince of Demetia. At Caer Gloui, the Roman Glevum, now Gloucester, he is said to have held court, as had a long line of ancestry before him, over the fertile regions about the Severn. There is reason to think that a native ruler was allowed by Rome to mint coins at this place bearing his name, and to exercise, rajah-like, under supervision, more or less of local sway; and after a time we find Vortigern there with the claim to a long pedigree. That is all we know, if we can be said to know anything, concerning the matter. Mr. Whittaker explains his name as a slight variation of Vor Tighairn, meaning Great King.

This *may* be no more than another synonyme for "imperator;" yet we can hardly insist on holding it so, unless we are prepared to rule out Lord and Earl, Prince and King, from the list of credible surnames.

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Few others, nevertheless, have given rise to so much extravagance in speculation. Mr. Coode is good enough to furnish him with Teutonic spelling and lineage, insisting that he has been put on the wrong side altogether, and led, in reality, a band of pirates to the invasion of Britain. Professor Rhys advances the more cruel hypothesis that he is an illusion entirely, a myth built up out of the character and the doings of Gerontius, the connecting link being that the latter was born in Britain.

The parallel is certainly notable; but there was a generation between the men; and there is nothing surprising in the fact that two thus separated should severally have had some hand in introducing the barbarians. In detail, the stories fall apart very widely; Vortigern acts partly through policy, partly through love; Gerontius through malignant jealousy. Vortigern invites the Saxon, by the advice of counsellors, to a realm which he controls; Gerontius instigates their assault on his native country for the injury done him by its ruler. Gerontius never enters Britain after the beginning of his treason; Vortigern is never intentionally a traitor, and never goes out of it. Probably the idea would not have suggested itself to any one but for that fluent Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was never at a loss to eke out one story with another.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE DAYS OF ROWENA.

VORTIGERN must have been ripe in age as well as in popularity when he attained the sovereign power, for his sons were leaders of men, soon after Hengist came; that is to say, in the fourth year of his supremacy. He must have commanded with ability, for the northern marauders withdrew, and the land was free to breathe again. He seems to have introduced or continued a sort of parliament, or council of the island. "*All* the counsellors" would indicate more than an adviser or two, and their place is before himself in the passage.

This much in his favor. On the other side he is charged by a monkish interpolator of the original Nennius with the shocking offence of marrying his own daughter; but this probably arises from confusion with his descendant Vortipore, against whom Gildas brings the same indictment. At all events, there is no corroboration whatever. Probably as a nominal Christian who allowed the devil to seduce him into wedlock with a pagan lady, he was thought quite open to suspicion. The Welsh, with a more patriotic ill-will, have dubbed him "Vortigern of the repulsive mouth;" whereby we at least may infer that he was

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not conspicuous for manly beauty. But, aside from the introduction of the Saxons, there really does not seem to be anything definite against him. And, as already shown, this cannot be laid wholly to his charge or to that of his generation.

Mr. Pearson wisely observes that the history of the southern part of the island has been mistaken for the history of the whole. The fortune of war and the chance of letters made this inevitable. A single writer (Gildas) of King Arthur's court, escaping from that downfall across the channel, put on record (A.D. 560) a burst of stormy invectives which embodies our nearest approach to a contemporary history of Vortigern's day. A school of Cumbrian poets (A.D. 550 to 600) left their stirring battle-lays by imperfect oral transition to be gathered and written down in a more literary time. A monk (probably), of whom we know nothing, but who may have been Nennius of Bangor, strung together (A.D. 600 to 700) so much of meagre history and impossible legend as would justify "Historia Britonnum" on the title-page. To this various additions of less authority were made at various times during the next four centuries. A leading subdivision of the conquerors collected and embalmed as dry chronicle whatever of earlier fact was yet (A.D. 700 to 800) extant in memoranda or recital. At divers times, altogether uncertain, but probably in part not much later, the

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Welsh, for similar reasons, embodied their national recollection more poetically in the form of tales and triads, which suffer from later imitation and forgery, so that not many are relied on. These, with some later gleanings in the field of tradition, and some side-lights from the continent, make up the entire array of our information. Nearly all of them relate chiefly to the southern, southeastern, and southwestern counties of England; or are so uncertain in allusion that men quarrel over them forever; or have to do with the North after the dissolution of Arthur's realm, and the upbuilding of that of Ida. Of the earlier independent British North, which had Isurium and the cities of the wall for its ornaments and Eboracum for its heart and capital, we can hardly be said to know anything definitely. Yet there was no wealthier, no more highly-civilized region in the whole land than this which has left no record of its tragical passing away.

The ignorance of Gildas with regard to it was so great that he could speak of Durham and Carlisle, the great human buttresses of the main wall, as "some cities (unnamed) which by chance had been built there." But he had other and graver disqualifications. Fanatically Christian, fanatically moral, fanatically Roman, he could see nothing good in the semi-heathen present, and believe nothing good of the Celt in the past. How far this blindness could carry him is shown in his

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diatribe on the "deceitful lioness," who dared resent the compliment of the "Roman rods." The wild warriors, who all but conquered with her, are "crafty foxes" to him. It would be interesting to hear Gildas on the unreasonable complaint of the daughters of Boadicea. But (there being soldiers of Rome in the episode) he lets this pass in silence, our furious apostle of purity!

With Nennius and the Chronicles, the bias takes a different turn. The former was British in a time when the early virulent divisions had died away; the latter were the work of Englishmen who had outgrown in part the love of slaughter, but felt a Celtic foe on their frontier still. Neither will admit very much in favor of the other. The battles are victories for both sides, or passed lightly over by the one which lost. Nennius knows nothing of the storming of Anderida. The Saxons have no direct allusion to Mount Badon.

But, all the more, when these agree in the main features of a story we must accept that story as true excepting only where common causes would distort every one alike. This agreement establishes that the British ruler, being menaced by the northern tribes, called to his aid the marauders of the German Sea; that these took service under him as mercenaries, and aided in beating back their former allies; that in reward they secured a foothold, where reinforcements

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increased their numbers; that they quarrelled with their employers, took up the more familiar *rôle* of assailant again, and finally overran a great part of Britain.

The accounts differ in detail and in matter of embellishment; for example, as to whether the new people were invited over from Germany or were merely descried sailing along the coast and offered by Vortigern their golden opportunity; as to whether there was or was not a treacherous massacre of the British leaders; as to whether the southeastern corner of the island was won by force of arms or by intimidation and a half-compulsory treaty. On some of these points we can pronounce absolutely in favor of one narrator or another; and in nearly every instance there are the means of giving at least a reasonable guess as to the truth. In the minds of them all the landing at Thanet and the long struggle to reach London seem to have taken a disproportionate place. Just thus, a quarter of a century ago, the dwellers in Washington and Richmond, seeing and hearing one shattering campaign after another in the battle-country between their earthworks, found it hard to believe that the war was not mainly *there*. Yet meanwhile a great section of a continent was being rent away from the losing combatant, between the Appalachian ridge and the Mississippi river, and at last the great weight of the conquerors

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came crashing through the narrow neck that remained, quite to the sea.

If we give Hengist credit for design, we must not suppose him so improvident as to begin his conquest only at the very tip of Kent, with the all but impregnable fortresses of Richborough, Reculver, Rochester, and London staring him full in the face. If we suppose him landing at first in good faith, to fight the invaders from beyond the wall, we are equally driven to a more northerly shore. One account says, we know not how authoritatively, that the Picts had reached Stamford in Lincolnshire, probably keeping to the open country between the cities as they came; that Hengist and his men were the main instruments of their defeat near that place; and that the Saxon leader obtained by stratagem from Vortigern sufficient land for a fortified settlement at Thongcaster on that coast. This accords so well with the needs of the time and the natural order of events that we may accept it without much danger.

At any rate, if the Saxons served at the north at all, they must have followed their retreating enemy through scenes that might well bewilder them with beauty. The wealth of Lindom, of York, of Isurium,—greater than ever for the time by the sudden concentration of all the surrounding country within those walls,—must have dazzled them and tempted them beyond bearing. The

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pillared rows, the bright tessalæ, the delicate carven vine-work, the architectural magnificence and splendor, may have been wasted on them in a measure, but left, no doubt, an abiding sense of illimitable booty. And where the naked Scot and tattooed savage had been so nearly, why should not they be, in turn, conquerors by a double conquest? Back to their lair they would go with fire in their hearts; and no payment would seem sufficient for its placating. This northern service afforded probably the lure which drew the great horde of sea-faring plunderers into Britain.

But there was no breach as yet; it may be no conscious intention looking that way. Hengist and Horsa had deserved well of the island empire, and were allowed to take up their abode not very far from the capital; indeed, at a stone's-throw from its main port, though cut off by a narrow fortified arm of the sea. With the last desolation of the Pict, Eboracum surely had lost her supremacy, and there was none but London whereon the mantle could fall. At London, Hengist would be a frequent visitor, with wise counsel on points of war. From London, Vortigern could set out with little toil for relaxation by the Wantsum with this new right arm of his realm. He seems to have been a convivial monarch, and susceptible to female charms. We all know the story of how these together overcame him.

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But it was a high price every way that he paid for Rowena. His own adult family, as a matter of course, were bitter against the alliance, and from what followed it seems likely that many of his Celtic adherents went with them. The Romanizing opposition found a brilliant young leader in Ambrosius, and were threatening rebellion. The Church was growling and thundering over him. Christian, British, and Roman indignation flashed and darkened together at this unheard-of yoking with the intruding heathen savage. But it was too late to draw back, and a common unpopularity bound him more and more tightly to Hengist.

The latter lost no time in strengthening himself by every means. Reinforcements were called over in alarming numbers, and to quiet apprehension were sent north, under his sons Octa and Ebissa, with a vague grant of lands and a pretence of keeping the Picts in check. This they did, incidentally wasting the Orkneys, and probably reviving some confidence in the Britons just south of the wall, whom they relieved. Their campaigns were probably not ended in one year, nor their influx with the first wave, since we are told by Nennius that they "took possession of many regions." Most likely their early settlements came straggling from Valentia down towards their old fastness of Thongcaster, all along that eastern coast.

Meanwhile, the Lincolnshire settlement was no doubt

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growing also, and that on Thanet overflowed the isle, emboldening the Saxon leader to demand the overlordship or kingship of Kent. By this time Vortigern must have felt sorely bested, but he could not refuse without bringing on open war; so he acceded, and thereby did very much the same thing in another way. For this gift was a robbery.

The tumults of that time are out of all elucidation, but we learn from Nennius that Guoryangus, the rightful ruler of the district, was in "grief" at his dispossession. This would hardly have been recorded if it had ended there. Probably regret became active resistance. In much the same fashion, an appendix gently tells us of "the quarrel between Ambrosius and Guitolin . . . which is Guoloppum, that is, Catgwaloph," *i.e.*, the battle of Wallop. Sometimes they understated, and sometimes they overstated, in the olden time. As for the last-named leader, we may guess with very great freedom. Possibly he was a competitor for the countship of the Saxon shore. So says one item which I have gathered, authority unknown. Or the ecclesiastical account of him already given may be so far correct; and perhaps on the whole this is most likely. We cannot doubt that the *odium theologicum* was by this time very near the crusading point, of course with some leader.

Besides these three disturbing elements, there prob-

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ably were others. Mr. Green is inclined to believe that a general rising took place of the rural and urban folk against each other. Mr. Pearson goes further, making Vortigern the head of the town party, and Hengist and Octa its very especial champions. But this last deliverance appears to be a freak of fancy, for everything goes to show that Vortigern was the champion of the Celtic party, which was necessarily weaker in the cities; and the ashes of Isurium bear their witness against the Saxon. Yet no doubt almost any kind of disorder may have been afoot. The lawful head of the country had gone over to the yet undeclared enemy, or was vibrating between friend and foe. No wonder Hengist found he had to deal with a "fluctuating people!"

We can easily understand how this state of affairs would aid in another way to bring on a crisis. The Saxons come as mercenaries; and although they had been granted a little territory, a modicum of dominion, they were not to be appeased without regular rations and increasing pay. On the other hand, their paymasters, who might have to fight them at any moment, must have found the tax particularly odious. The power of withholding supplies will lie somewhere under even the most imperfect government. It will surely be thought of as a weapon, when disagreement occurs with the executive. There may have been

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more than one day, when the remoter districts withheld all tribute; when the cities in the Roman interest and the centres of religious life angrily refused it; when the council of Britain declared with covert satisfaction that it was altogether unable to replenish the treasury; when even Vortimer, the darling of the Celt, the Prince of Wales, in a very emphatic sense, came forward to say that it was time for the strangers to be gone.

In such a quarrel, the right may well have been with each, or seemed so to be. To the Saxon, the Briton was a faithless ingrate, rightly given over to destruction; an effeminate cumberer of the earth; a noisy, unstable mixture of the voluptuary and the pharisee. What the Briton thought of the Saxon we have seen in Gildas already. The outcome is in half a sentence of Ethelward,—"All parties fly to arms, the Britons give way." But its terseness may easily mislead.

The north must have been ill prepared after its losses by foray. When the word came to Octa and his hardy, hungry raiders, and they rushed inland from points of vantage like Scarborough and Flamborough, or urged their oars up the great estuary of the Humber, no force may have been available which could hold them in check, unless behind the walls of the larger cities. Quoting Gildas, "The fire of vengeance

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spread from sea to sea, fed by the hands of our foes in the east, and did not cease until, destroying the neighboring towns and lands, it reached the other side of the island and dipped its red and savage tongue in the western ocean." If this were not at the north, where was it? Unless then and there, the "western ocean" was not reached overland by the invaders until long after the date of his writing. It is possible that in the course of these onsets a light party might occasionally push clear across the waist of the island, setting a few western villages in a blaze. But, perhaps, it is more likely that Gildas and his rhetoric went astray.

It was not the work of one season nor of one decade. Wave after wave dashed in through the open country and withdrew, or settled about the isolated cities, holding them in leaguer. At last, in some unguarded moment, or some unusually heavy onfall, the defence gave way—and the heathen were among the houses. Then altars were overturned; then marble columns were hurled from their pedestals by blow on blow of the battering-ram; then the great mass of the basilica and the towers along the walls came crashing down; then fled they all together, "bishops, priests, and people, whilst the sword gleamed and the flames crackled around them on every side." They sought —when they might—the wild moorland valleys with

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cliff-caverns looking out on them; no secure hiding place from any permanent foe who knew the land, but such as would answer their turn for awhile with the soon ebbing sea-rovers.

Here with their short-horn cattle they came, their horses tethered on the grass below, their sheep and sheep-dogs, their weapons and jewelry, and all that made up the household life of civilized women and men. Not once only, nor in a single party, nor from a single quarter, nor ever for long; but again and again, as the need returned, with stores varying as their condition varied. This at any rate seems the most plausible explanation of the diversity in the Victoria cavern relics. I cannot believe with Mr. Green that this unsuitable asylum was clung to perversely by any one body of refugees, until their pots and spindles gave out and were replaced by pitiful make-shifts, and they lost even the memory of the culture from which they came. It must also be said that he has set far too late a date for the beginning of these northern conquests.

Yet we may well admire the brilliant application made by him of physical geography and local nomenclature in illustrating the dark places of history. The method is that of Dr. Guest, but pursued with a greater elaboration of detail and over a wider area. Little can be added to it, at least in the present state

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of knowledge. No doubt Lindsey and Holderness were the first regions to be overrun, lying as they do on either side of the Humber, that great portal of the north. Derventio, near the first capital and main settlement of the Deirans, may well have fallen soon after. Others would follow here and there; either stormed and entirely laid waste, or admitted to some such composition as Mr. Pearson supposes,—that is, each allowed to live on more or less according to its old routine with a watchful Saxon settlement looking in upon it from some neighboring stockaded hill. But perhaps they had hardly secured any strong position on the great northern way before the first reaction bore them back.

At the south the field is limited; the defences are fairly well known; the Chronicles and Nennius contain fragmentary records of the events, from opposite points of view. Gildas is silent, but then he could hardly speak without magnifying the Celtic Vortimer, the right arm of the Britons.

The first battle mentioned by the Saxons—with the date of 455—was fought by Hengist and Horsa "against Vortigern in the plain of Ægelsthrep," which Dr. Guest identifies with the lowest ford on the Medway. This is a rather long march from Thanet, but the doctor, himself a notable pedestrian, will have them there over land. Mr. Green, accepting this hypothesis, and elab-

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orating it after his fashion, has given us a fascinating panorama of the campaign,—a panorama so vivid that it ought to be true! We see the fierce ocean-warriors bursting across the Wantsum between the two great fortresses; wading the marshes of the Stour under the rain of missiles from the doomed walls of Durovernum; clambering the woody heights of Blean with the blaze of the city far behind them and the whole panic-stricken country-side rushing wildly on ahead; forcing the passage of the Medway, where the British imperator has hurriedly taken his stand for the salvation of West Kent; driving the fight up doggedly through the village of Aylesford, till Horsa and Categirn fall (some say in single fight) and the Saxons halt on the ground they have won, raising Hengist with acclaim in full form to be their king.

But, excepting the outcome, this can hardly have been so. The story assumes too hastily that there were no Saxon defeats before the first Saxon victory. Nennius, in what is probably the oldest part of the work, declares, "At length Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, valiantly fought against Hengist, Horsa, and his people; drove them to the isle of Thanet, and thrice enclosed them (that is, no doubt, triple-walled them) within it, and beset them on the western side." He repeats, also, with detail, "Four times did Vortimer valorously encounter the enemy. The first has been mentioned, the

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second was upon the river Darent, *the third* at the Ford, in their language called Eppsford, though in ours Setthirgabail; the fourth battle he fought was near the stone on the shore of the Gallic sea, where the Saxons, being defeated, fled to their ships."

This last entry is in itself a refutation of an error common to nearly all writers on the subject,—they tacitly assuming that the sea-kings had already forsaken the sea. In point of fact, the Saxon endeavors were more often by water than by land for the next hundred years. Especially must this have been the case with such a region as the Caint, having a waterfront for more than half its boundary and water-courses opening here and there into its very heart.

If we assume London to have been his immediate objective, the theory is even less plausible. By the admission of his enemy, Hengist "united craft and penetration." Are we then to believe that he neglected the most obvious expedients of generalship? Why should he incur the fearful hazard of crossing a navigable strait between two hostile fortresses with a strong force in his front, while the whole seaward face of his island lay open and the mouth of the Thames lay open too? However it might be on shore, he had absolute command of the water. Both habit and circumstance made it his most natural means of transportation.

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But at the beginning of the contest there is reason to believe that very little transportation was needed. He may have been in peaceable possession of the country as far as the Medway, under Vortigern's irregular cession. When Hengist found himself, by imperial grant, the sovereign of all Kent, he was hardly the man to let it remain a title only. We are told by Nennius that "Hengist continued by degrees sending for ships from his own country . . . and," seemingly as a result, "whilst his people were increasing in power and number they came to the above-named province of Kent." Where was he before the later accessions? In Thanet, evidently. It had been severed from Kent of the mainland both by nature and by treaty. To this mainland Kent the overflow must have been directed; and we may be sure that he would push the work of peaceful occupancy as fast and as far as the Britons would let him. Even if there were to be a war, this might well seem his wisest policy.

The frontier cities, in their bewilderment, would at first be glad to make some compensation; some acknowledgment of him as their overlord in return for the assurance of safety. The partial destruction of Durovernum, indicated by Mr. Green, may seem to make against this theory; but it need not have occurred until later, when there was ample opportunity and provocation, as we shall see. Moreover, Mr. Pearson

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has pointed out that the town (under the name of Canterbury) still inherits much of privilege and organization from this earlier day. He tells us the same of Rochester and other places in East Kent. Certainly, facts like these point to survival by compromise; just as the custom of gavelkind points to an unwarlike surrender by the Kentish Saxon, long afterwards.

Very likely, though, his new authority had become irksome to the people, even before Vortimer openly withstood or assailed him. In that case, its collapse would follow soon. Whichever side took the offensive, the first battle was a defeat for Hengist, probably in the eastern part of West Kent, the scene of so many later struggles. A general rising of the country already occupied would aid in throwing him back upon his island lair. The oval walls of Durovernum would refuse him admittance and send forth parties to harass the flank of his retreat. The dispossessed Guorang (to accept the more manageable version of that name) would hurry to take part in the lively chase. The watchful Roman-Britons of Rutupiæ and Reculver would cross their spears from side to side before the deep natural fosse which cut his line of escape. It is probable that he won temporary safety only by bursting through them into Thanet with heavy loss. He cannot have saved more than a part of the mainland settlers. Then came Vortimer with his men; and the three great lines

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of earthwork were thrown up, reaching, no doubt, from the one fortress to the other. With the Wantsum of that day for a moat, and a British army behind them elate with victory, these triple fortifications may well have seemed, and have been, impregnable to the invader. He had good cause to tremble for even his last foothold in southern Britain.

Such is a conjectural outline of the first campaign, of which we find on record little more than the causes and the ending. I claim for it only more complete harmony with all our information than any preceding theory.

Of course, in his calamity he would send for all available reinforcements; calling, for example, every man who could be spared from the more prosperous forces at the north. As his strength grew again, his aggressive confidence revived. Moreover, he had too many men for his little island. Of this they would not fail to remind him. Nor would they be content for their ships (or long-boats as we should call them now) to be idle, knowing full well that the Britons were no match for them on the water. Vortimer must have had some sort of flotilla, but it probably retreated up the Thames, towards London, when the enemy drew near, and closed the channel in some way behind it at the first narrowing of the river. This was the natural thing to do, if time allowed. It would

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compel the landing of Hengist on the Kent shore then and there, which seemingly was just what happened.

But once ashore the chances were against him. Vortimer hastened back from Rutupiæ to head him off, or sallied from the capital with the forces gathered there. Hengist may have found himself between two fires. At any rate, he could not carry the first line of defence that crossed his way. Somewhere along the little river Darent, the Celt and the Teuton, as we call them, came to spear-thrust and sword-play until the invader sullenly withdrew. His fleet most likely bore him to his earthworks in Thanet again.

We cannot suppose that Vortimer, twice victor in Kent, would remain quiescent thereafter. The north, worn and harried by repeated inroads, and ill organized for struggling against them, must have called him, surely not without response. The first great rally of the Britons, under his leadership, may have beaten back the Anglo-Saxons well eastward of the great lines of communication. If London were to be really the seat of government for the island, he must keep these under his hand at any cost. Perhaps he made Octa as much a prisoner in Holderness and the lowlands of Lincolnshire and the waste country north of Durham as Hengist himself was in the insular tip of Kent. No doubt, also, he appeased contention within the land. Even the Roman faction may have begun to feel some

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hope in the reigning dynasty. A monkish legend, inserted in one version of Nennius, represents Vortimer as even humiliating himself to conciliate the Church that his father had angered. On the other side, even that father was obliged to become active in patriotic duty. The next contest, by the Saxon account, was with Vortigern himself; but this probably means no more than nominal leadership, for Nennius explicitly awards the honor of victory to his more heroic son.

This is the fight near Aylesford, with which Dr. Guest and Mr. Green have begun. There may be fair excuse for doing so, in the prominence that each side has given it, and in the results immediately following.

Hengist was afloat again with a mighty company in that year, A.D. 455. He took the old course, for it was the only one towards London which he could take sanely. The Essex shore presented a waste of marshes and lagoons at that day, where his advancing forces might be taken at disadvantage and cut off to a man. The river, of course, was no longer open. Probably Vortimer had found means to block the channel at an even lower point than before. At any rate, Hengist evidently took to land on the Kent side before reaching the mouth of the Medway.

Turning southward from Rochester, which he had no time to trifle with, he came face to face with his enemy in great force at the first passage of the stream.

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It must have been a very obstinately contested conflict. Each army lost a noted chief, a brother of its commander. Each claimed the victory. The assailants made Hengist king of Kent, by some rude coronation, on the field which he had won. The defenders gave it the name "Sassanæg habæl,"—the slaughter of the Saxons,—and set down one more triumph to the account of Vortimer. The former were right, in so far as the position of their enemy had been carried, and that enemy driven back. The latter were right, in so far as the main design of Hengist was thwarted. This time, nevertheless, he maintained his footing on the border of West Kent, and probably reduced a part of the country behind him.

Of course there would be frequent skirmishing between his people, in their two isolated possessions by the Wantsum and the Medway, and the string of angry hornet-nests along the shore,—Dover and Lyme, Reculver and Richborough. Of course, too, at the north warfare must have been awake again. Yet two years went by before he felt strong enough to attack once more the army which covered London.

This time he had not far to go. There may have been opposition, as before, at the passing of the Darent; but the main battle is believed to have been on the Cray, "a little stream which falls through a quiet valley from the chalk downs, hard by at Orpington."

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There was no quiet on this little stream that day. Four thousand British corpses were strewn about the valley, during the havoc of fight and flight, and also well over the Middlesex marshes towards Southwark. The Saxon Chronicle tells us of the fear with which the routed forces fled into London; Ethelward repeats the story a little more mildly; even Nennius bears witness to it by his silence.

Yet, for some reason, the victor did not pursue his advantage. London was not captured, or we should have heard thereof. It was indeed all but impregnable if adequately manned. Nor could men and weapons long be wanting. No doubt a great cry for aid was answered by the gleam of spear-heads on every foot of the wall. No doubt, also, the British forces under Vortimer soon took the offensive again. Mr. Green points out that the lost ground was all very quickly regained. The steps we can only infer,—an assault on the Saxon here, a dislodgement there, a probable cutting off from the Thames, a distressful retreat across the body of the Caint, with a swarm of enemies hovering and darting in about the flanks and rear, a long disastrous campaign of which Nennius, after his usual fashion, gives us only the sequel, "on the shore of the Gallic sea." No doubt Thanet was quite large enough again for the men of Hengist. Just across the strait, Vortimer ever sat watching, and when, after a short

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interval, he sickened and died, he was buried at Rutupiæ, the main port of London, that, dead or living, his eye should be on them still.

But Nennius will have it that more than this had been on his mind. "Anxious for the future prosperity of his country, he charged his friends to inter his body at the entrance of the Saxon port,—viz., upon the rock where the Saxons first landed; 'for though,' said he, 'they may inhabit *other parts of Britain*, yet, if you follow my commands, they will never remain in *this island*.'" According to Ethelward, this landing-place was Wipped's-fleet, on the isle of Thanet. Nor can "this island" have any other meaning.

His dying request, if real, may have more wisdom in it than is on the surface now. It called for no less than the dislodgement of the foreigners from their last foothold, and its permanent occupancy as his sepulchre. He may have relied on the intensity of his followers' devotion for one final onslaught which nothing could withstand; and for a long guardianship, making one bit of British soil invincible.

Again the meaning—the after-thought of a later time—may be that so solemn an appropriation would prevent all revelry there. For, be it known that Wipped's-fleet became the scene of the murderous feast of the long knives.

Whatever the intention, it was not carried into effect.

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Perhaps the sea-folk were too grim, as they stood on the last fringe of the land, very desperately at bay. Perhaps Vortigern was wrought upon through Rowena, since an apochryphal triad tells us that to please her he even made exposure of his dead heroic son. There was some falling short, at any rate. "They imprudently disobeyed his last injunction, and neglected to bury him where he had appointed." Yet the Saxon may have had a brisk alarm; for he was "strengthened by new accessions," "assisted by foreign pagans," and "firmly incorporated" in the island he had been so near leaving. He "collected his ships and consulted by what strategem they might overcome Vortigern and his army."

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CHAPTER V.

THE PRINCE OF THE SANCTUARY.

HENGIST may well have felt that his opportunity had come. For years he had been crashing painfully against a resistance which gave way now a little, now not at all, but invariably in the end beat him back. The campaigns which he inaugurated were only a means of educating his enemies. He had trained them; he had hardened them; he saw them continually before him, a force in every way more than equal to his own. But, besides himself, he must thank for this the will, the skill, and the daring which taught them at the first how to make good their stand. In the wavering that had been already, it was plainly to be seen that "Guorthemer of blessed memory" was indeed only a memory now. The life of the British army lay in the cluster of chieftains who had fought so long under him and still maintained his tradition of leadership. Panic and paralysis would follow, if these could be tempted aside and suddenly swept away.

The tale of that fatal banquet, though often doubted, is probably true. The same thing had been done in Thuringia, and even on a lesser scale, by Roman gen-

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erals. It has been repeated, with slight modification, by Western frontiersmen of our own day. Precedents are incentives—to a fifth-century pirate, in no very great need of them. If we are to disbelieve everything monstrous, we must throw away history and the newspapers together. The earlier facts or legends that have been thought to give a mythical air to the story are really its corroboration. In later times it was placed at Stonehenge,—erroneously, for nothing could have taken Hengist there; but Nennius does not mention that place. Perhaps the slaughter, long afterwards, of Natanleod and his five thousand may have led Geoffrey and others astray.

As Vortigern and his nobles came by invitation, the banquet must have been set on the isle of Thanet. Wipped's-fleet, where the Saxon first landed, would be as likely a place as any. Perhaps it was the centre of their encampment and defence, now that Vortimer had marked it out by a death-bed menace. According to Ethelward, in 465 "there was a great slaughter made on that day; twelve chiefs of the Britons fell near a place called Wipped's-fleet; there fell a soldier of the Saxons called Wipped!" There is, no doubt, a great difference between this dozen and the three hundred nobles or elders of Nennius. But the one may have had in view the commanders only; the other, every minor chief also who had been invited to his death.

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In each account it falls into the same sequence of events, and the outcome also is the same.

We can see it all even yet,—the Saxon embassy offering peace, with the good things of reconciliation; the ready acceptance by a too convivial crew; the friendly crossing of the Wantsum to welcoming hands; the long hall of Hengist, double-lined with revellers, —every second man trustful and careless, every man between with a dagger up his sleeve; the sudden pre-concerted brawl; the knife-cry of Hengist,—"Nimed eure sexa;" the up-flashing and down-darting of the keen bronze or steel; the shrieks, the groans, the struggling cries; the one or two mighty Britons who did not die breaking frantically from the shambles amid all the din! Then the sudden rush on the leaderless British army; its flight, horror-stricken, as from demons rather than men! And so Kent, after thirteen years of battle, was lost by murderous treachery to the Briton forever.

But even then Hengist could get no further. Possibly, as Nennius relates, he may have extorted from Vortigern, his captive, a cession of Essex, Sussex, and Middlesex; but it was not recognized outside of the Saxon camp, and every rood of that territory must be fought for or left unwon. Even within Kent itself there were many islets of hostile area. One by one the inland cities would be brought back with a wrench to

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their subjection or fall before his vengeance, and after them the great Roman fortresses of the coast-line; but this may have taken many years. Rutupiæ (Richborough) very likely outlasted him, as London certainly did, although so near.

Meanwhile, a formidable enemy was growing in the west. By a stroke of policy, Hengist freed Vortigern and sent him thither, to take off the first edge of the steel. It is a pity that we know so little of the second great champion on the British side. His name would seem to have been Ambrose (Welsh, Emrys), Latinized into Ambrosius, with the titular addition Aurelianus, or, as prefix, Aurelius. He may have been, as some say, heir to a princedom in Devon; or, as Dr. Guest believed, a son of that ill-fated Cæsar, Constans, who left a monastery for the grave. Legend favors the latter theory; so did the general opinion of former times. Gildas declares that his parents were adorned with the purple; and this may have some weight, although approval of that hue was by no means exclusively imperial in his time. Nennius makes him claim descent from a Roman "consul," a term which would fit, when thus written, almost any potentate or official except the very lowest. Professor Rhys suggests that he may have been related to Nectarides, Count of the Saxon Shore, who was slain in the time of Theodosius. But this seems to be a groundless

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conjecture. The evident enthusiasm of the Roman party for him, with some coincidences of years and names, will incline our judgment, although doubtfully, towards the descent through the second Constantine. But, however it may be with regard to his birth, we cannot doubt that he had an imperial nature.

Nennius—or more probably an interpolator of the tenth century—brings him before us in a wild romance of magic, oddly confused as to identity with his inspired counsellor and bard. The tale would seem to have long floated in the popular mind before taking this written form. It is the first appearance of a theme very fertile in Welsh literature,—the prophecies of Merlin. It puts Ambrose before us—and no other British leader—with the title of emperor. The miraculous part, half Christian, half druidical, may safely be set down to the great master of enchantment,—the wall supernaturally overthrown as often as reared; the ordained sacrifice of a son having no earthly father, his youthful wisdom confounding the elders; the revealing of that fantastic underworld, where the two dragons of the isle maintain their age-long combat until the hour when the Cymry shall fully regain their own. Is this indeed more than a prose transcription of some poem by Merlin himself? It is not among those ascribed to him; but there may have been many which no longer survive in metrical form.

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The passages referring to the age of the expounder would probably indicate the cause of the confusion of persons. The statement of territorial cession must mean a cession to Ambrose, and to him only. Vortigern thereby surrenders "that city and all the western provinces of Britain."

This narrative hints at one of those odd Celtic transactions, wherein priestly art and the credulity of princes were given a political value. In part they represent the druidical power surviving or reviving in new trappings and under another name. Generations later, the same agency was at work in establishing the supremacy of Maelgwn. The present instance has the air of a trial of skill between Vortigern's half-pagan wise men and the Christian miracle-workers. The latter must have seen their best hope in the ascendency of Ambrose.

Geoffrey of Monmouth romances differently. He brings the son of Constans over the channel, to avenge, for one thing, the murder of his father, which nobody then in Britain had committed. In "the plot of the long knives" Ambrose had no doubt a very adequate provocation; but even of this the news came to him through a preternatural figure,—"Eldol, Duke of Gloucester," who shattered his way stake in hand out of the fatal banquet-hall over the dead bodies of seventy armed Saxons. We do not learn how he came by a title from Vortigern's own city. But he may stand

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for some real fugitive who brought the dreadful truth, as an eye-witness, to the Devonian legions of Ambrose.

Their outcry of horror and execration has not ceased its echo even yet. We can form some idea of what it must have been. The men in whom the Britons confided—the fortress commanders, the daring mountain chiefs, the lieutenants on whom had fallen the mantle of their dead Vortimer—all by one damnable and heartless treason were laid low. Slain by the hands that offered friendship and food! If the disaster really were less, rumor would magnify it. The crime it could not magnify. And their ruler Vortigern, the husband of the Saxon woman, bound by a double alliance, was seemingly consenting thereto. Suspected already, the mere sparing of his life might well be put in evidence against him. The north was probably once more in a life and death struggle against Octa; but all the western Britons may have come angrily surging towards London with the Roman leader at their head.

Vortigern can hardly have been in favor with any great portion of his people; but there were those who adhered to him and went out to the fight. Some may have come, with the retainer feeling, from the province which he inherited. Some, benefiting by his court and patronage, were in dread of any change. A few may have loved him personally or hated the Roman faction

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worse than any invader. Out of the Saxon clutches and in extreme need of partisans, Vortigern could vie with any in wrathful abhorrence of the massacre; he could repudiate his enforced concession; he could declare for vengeance as soon as the domestic enemy should be out of the way.

If we believe the triad, he went even further in conciliation. Then, or thereafter, seemingly by a partial abdication, he left the kingdom of London to his young son Gotta by Rowena (Alis Ronwen), "wherefore the kings of London are called sons of Alis." It is uncertain authority, but derives some support from the fact that we hear so little of London in the time of Ambrose and Arthur, and from the independent attitude of the city during the Saxon sway. According to Dr. Freeman, London, though acknowledging one sovereignty or another, "seems to have held her own as a distinct power . . . a free imperial city, bearing rule, like Berne or Venice, over her Unterthaner, the still subject district of the Middle Saxons."

By such or other means, and from these or other sources, an army was brought together and moved westward into the Gwent or open upland north of the Andred-wood. Probably Winchester, the great city of that region, was his first object. With or without battle, this was won; and they marched onward over three-fourths of the way towards the strong post of

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Sorbiodunum. Ambrose and his men were there already in force, but came out to meet them at the Wallop-fields. Then and there was fought "Catgualoph," the battle of Wallop, which broke the power of Vortigern so utterly that the word is a provincial synonyme for a thrashing to this day.

Dr. Guest has fixed the locality. Nennius makes the time "twelve years from the reign of Vortigern," who may have been considered as superseded by Vortimer after the defeat near Aylesford. This would bring us to 467, about two years after the massacre at Wipped's-fleet, a most unlikely interval. Other estimates prefer A.D. 463 for the accession of Ambrose; and he may have claimed the imperial purple then. But after this great victory, if not before, he became Embres Guledig to the Celtic Briton, Aurelius Ambrosius to the Roman. Guitolin may have opposed his authority, or may have fought under him. This must remain obscure. There is no definite account of any opposition. He may have tolerated the son of Vortigern as a half-independent sub-king in what was even yet the metropolis, and the far northern armies may not even nominally have accepted his command. But he was the one man who might claim with show of reason to be the ruler of Britain.

Vortigern vanishes in the mist of the Welsh mountains. The Nennius expanders give us a liberal choice

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of extravagances. Either he was worried from place to place by St. Germanus and all the British clergy, praying continuously forty days together for his sins, until fire from Heaven mercifully put an end to his torment, or they merely shamed him out of all happiness in living, until, "deserted and a wanderer . . . broken-hearted, he made an ignominious end;" or "the earth opened and swallowed him alive with all his belongings, not leaving even a trace." Geoffrey tries to work something plausible out of all this, declaring that Ambrosius and his brother set fire to the impregnable tower which was their enemy's asylum, thereby destroying him. But there is no reason to suppose that this has any better foundation. Perhaps the most likely conjecture is that it suited his purpose to hide away and raise a cloud of rumors to prevent all search. We find his son Pascent retaining control of his province Demetia, and later Gildas mentions it as governed by Vortipore, who was probably his grandson. It is a fair inference that the fallen ruler spent his last years in the hills not far from Cair Gloui, very willing to be unseen and forgotten. In the words of Nennius, "enough has been said of Vortigern."

Turn we now to the rising star, Ambrosius Aurelianus. Geoffrey gives the following fancy sketch, guided, it may be, by hints which are lost to us now. The coloring is chivalric, of his own day, but the noble

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ideal is of all time. "Such," says he, "was the bravery and courage this prince was master of, that while he was in Gaul there was none that durst encounter him. For in all encounters he either dismounted his adversary or broke his spear. Besides, he was magnificent in his presence, constant at his devotions, temperate in all respects, and, above all things, hated a lie. A brave soldier on foot, a better on horseback, and expert in the discipline of an army."

The much more modern estimate of Mr. Pearson is not very inconsistent therewith. We read that he was "a king of character and ability;" that he was "evidently regarded as the champion of the national cause against the Saxon invader;" and that he "tried to oppose Roman discipline to the irregular fury of the Saxons. The very 'dragon of the great pendragonship' had been copied from a Roman ensign."

The continental ecclesiastical writers, quoted at second hand in "Poste's Brittanica Antiqua," are at issue about the religious attitude of Ambrose, one account making him a restorer of the orthodox faith, another an Arian at heart and supporter of Hebrews and Manicheans, although admitting that he maintained peace and order in his dominions and showed himself zealous in reform. The seeming contradiction may imply only that he had the mental breadth to care little for minor distinctions of dogma; that he was willing to live and

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let live in matters of religious belief, while fighting vehemently to maintain the rights of his people in this and every other regard. He was the standard-bearer of Christianity against heathendom, not of any narrow sect or the phraseology of any verbal creed. But the charge of indifference or hostility can hardly be made against the founder of the great choir of Amesbury, the chief monastery of Britain, "the wall of the Eternal." The title given him by his enemies, the one title which clung about his last battle-field and burial-place, was Natanleod, Prince of the Sanctuary.

Mr. Whittaker, the eighteenth-century historian of Manchester, who mentions this identification, afterwards so admirably developed by Dr. Guest, also makes the campaigns of Ambrose against the Saxons begin at the north. *A priori*, there is probability in this. Octa in a new rush may well have been carrying all before him, while the southern British leaders were wasting their strength on each other. Perhaps it was then that the fortified site of Durham passed into Anglo-Saxon hands. Perhaps York was beset and Isurium and Blackrode were swept away. Then the vitals of the land were laid bare, and the isolated forts of the Kent shore must be abandoned to their own devices. As for London, it was probably in no grave danger, above all if held in name for a grandson of Hengist; and at worst Ambrose might properly aid cities which were

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loyal to him rather than those which were half hostile or standing alone.

Whittaker says that he was defeated, but this is only a conjecture from winnings of the enemy which may have been made before. Blondes and Sigebert, quoted by Dr. Guest, aver that he led the Britons many times against the Saxons, and was at last defeated and slain; that they fought under him with various success for forty-five years. Words like these do not indicate any very discouraging overthrow at the beginning. Probably he and his army moved on the northern invaders with all the confidence which the rout of Vortigern could give, and struck them so hard and so often that they were glad to draw back. Geoffrey evidently had this idea. He narrates with impossible detail a great victory from which Octa escaped to York. He executes poetical justice on Hengist himself by the hand of Eldol at the town of Kaerconan. He makes Octa surrender himself and the garrison of York to the mercy of the victor, while Ebissa implores permission to live and pay tribute. Nothing less than the entire reduction of the enemy will content him. We may smile over this contravention of history, but there is probably so much truth behind it as that Ambrose the Guledig fought manfully in Yorkshire and attained the general object of his efforts. Otherwise, the north-western assailants would without delay have burst over

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the backbone of the island into the tempting valleys of the Severn and the Dee. But these were to remain free and prosperous for another hundred years.

From this great work the south before long must have been calling him wildly. The Saxons of the Caint were dangerously astir again. "Hengist with his son Aesc a second time make war against the Britons,"—perhaps for the rich pasture-lands of Romney; perhaps to exchange an uncertain influence over London for its actual occupancy.

Dr. Guest and Mr. Green accept the former hypothesis, but for no convincing reason. And in every other endeavor the great Saxon leader seems to have aimed at the queenly city. Wipped's-fleet can hardly be called an exception, for London, with all else at the southeast, might be expected to fall as the result.

Mr. Pearson and others have called attention to the suspiciously artificial regularity of these and later doings, in the Chronicles. For half a century nearly everything takes place "after eight years," or after three, both being sacred intervals. But this may mean only that the very sacredness caused the choosing of such years for enterprises of moment; or that those events were best remembered which could be made to fall into this kind of rhythm.

The exciting cause of the new outbreak is hidden. Possibly the native advisers of the boy-king by the

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Thames had proved less pliant than had been hoped by his rapacious kindred. Or his crown may have been a foot-ball by this time between revolutionary Romans and fiery Celts. Whoever was uppermost undoubtedly put together some power, very likely in part of the militia or train-band sort, for we hear of an "army" that was "slaughtered," and learn by the still earlier account how "the Britons fled from the Saxons like fire." Yet the latter, though "victors," are said to "remain on the field of battle," and there is an implication of withdrawal even in the boastful words, "they *carry off* immense spoil." If we suppose that the city levies were routed, that the cattle of the Middlesex marshes were made booty, that the villas and villages were rifled as far as Southwark, but that in the end the trained legions of Ambrose came efficiently to the rescue, we may not be very wide of the mark. This theory will harmonize with all the facts that we know. The outcome may have taken the form of a treaty between the contending powers. We hear of no other attempt on London during four generations, while Hengist and his heirs remained secure in the possession of Kent.

This cannot have been for a long time a very homogeneous kingdom. Besides the mixture of Teuton and Scandinavian already referred to, there were tough indigestible bits of Britondom here and there, which

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could not simply "draw back" after defeat, according to the programme of "the making of England," but would often be able to make good terms before surrender. From inroad after inroad, many, no doubt, had fled beyond the border, but some would accept servitude, to remain in their old homes, others would be allowed to live as they had lived before, and still others would come trooping in for work or trade when the wild forayers were known to have taken to farming. Probably the woodlands and marshlands were never so densely peopled. There all were Celtic. Along the skirts of the forest Celt and Saxon must have intermingled; along the Wantsum, the Scandinavian with the eminently composite Roman. Different surroundings had their effect also. The Merscwara between the Rother and Lymne are pointed out as a distinct folk, though subsidiary; and for long there were underkings of West Kent in the debatable lands beyond the Medway.

Perhaps a seeming contradiction may be explained here, for Ethelward makes Aesc, the son of Hengist, begin to *reign in Kent* in 488, while Nennius declares that Octa, on the death of his father, "came from the sinistral part of the island to the *kingdom of Kent*, and from him have proceeded all the kings of that province." Aesc, as a younger brother, may have had but a subordinate half-realm.

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This is the last that we hear of Hengist. Indeed, there is no record of this pirate-monarch for fifteen years before. Mr. Green supposes him to have engaged in the wearisome task of reducing the great fortresses that dotted his coast. There is nothing unlikely in this; yet, when their case was found to be hopeless, one would have expected a garrison here and there to be borne away by sea. Many ports were still in the hands of the Britons. If this were done, the fact has not been told.

Among the many dark and puzzling questions of the fifth century, there is none more inscrutable than that of Britain on the sea. Carausius had a navy to resist the Saxons and Romans; Alfred had a swift and efficient navy to drive off the Northmen. It is hard to believe that the second Constantine did not leave behind some vessels of war. It is harder to understand why Ambrose should have failed to supply this crying need from the merchant fleet of the Severn, or to have made ample purchase along the Gallic coast.

There was no lack of shipping. When the army of Riothamus moved back and forth across the Channel, a multitude of sails and oars must have carried them. When the Bretons fled to Britain, and the Britons in turn fled to Brittany, they had other propulsion than their own swimming. A Gallic youth, contemplating a course of saintship, is made to turn quite naturally

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to British trading-vessels for means of transport. Almost every bard or sage or visionary of the next hundred years is recorded as finding his way freely over the water. The Saxon had changed the landing-places of the island sails, but thus far can hardly have lessened their number.

Yet they play no part in the great contest. Half the coast-line was beset, but we hear of no effort to raise the blockade. Expedition after expedition of the Saxons descended, without fear of interruption, unless from the militia of the land. A well-appointed British fleet might have cut off all succor from Thanet at a critical time, and thus have ended the war. Later, it might have linked Richborough with Reculver, transferred the other scattered garrisons to the same quarter, and so built up a menace in the enemy's rear. Even a few ships would have scattered the little squadron of Ælle, wherewith he began the ruin of Sussex. Not many would have been required to best Cerdic quite off the shore. At any stage of the conflict a navy would have been a godsend to the Briton. Yet neither side has even a dim authentic reference to it as a fighting power, unless in the death-song of Corroi, the "Lord of the Southern Sea." But this title may have been no more than a bit of vaunting from the shore-line. Besides, Mr. Skene, demolishing Mr. Stephens, has found Corroi's adversary in a

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mythical Irishman of the Ossianic cycle, who died centuries on centuries before, if he ever lived at all. Corroi as an admiral has too many dates that will not come together, for sober history.

What has been said of the shipping brings into light certain urban changes which must then have been going on. From the day when Hengist planted his outposts along the lower Thames and filled its estuary with his fleet, he held by the throat the maritime commerce of London. Hardly could a vessel pass in or out unless by his permission, and his people were not yet at the stage of development where this would be given. London was a port no longer, and must live mainly by caravans. The main current of business and travel was diverted more and more to the south-western shore, and to what has been called the Severn Sea. Exeter, Bath, and Caerleon throve at the expense of London, as Chicago and St. Louis might thrive at the expense of New York in the case of a sea-line blockade.

The overland travel to the southern coast was another factor, though a less one, in the shifting of wealth and population. There had always been something of the sort, answering to the later stage-coach lines, by way of Richborough. This route probably moved westward to Dover and thence to Lymne, as the invaders came that way. When even these termini were

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cut off, the main human stream flowed necessarily around the Andred-wood to Southampton Water and other indentations of the coast-line, adding to the prosperity of Silchester and Winchester by the way. There was no doubt, in consequence, and for greater safety, a shifting of metropolitan population thus far westward; while the harried districts of the northeast and the towns too often beleaguered may well have sent swarms of people into the protected and fertile Gwent. Commerce would also find or force its way from London more directly to the Channel through the mass of the forest. One such route must have led to the strongly-fortified seaport of Anderida, the capital of an important mining region. Another has been traced northeastward from Chichester. Where the first valley that it crosses came out of the woodland, a Roman villa-site furnishes evidences of even more than usual taste and luxury. Wealth, it may be, centred especially in this western end of the long fertile strip which the South Saxon before long made his own. Great cities were not far away. There was probably some conspicuous temptation in that quarter, for the first attack was directed thither.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE CONQUEST OF SUSSEX.

In 477, say the Chronicles, Ælle the Saxon, with his three sons, put out from Germany for Britain. Most likely they touched at Thanet or Dover, picking up some recruits and supplies by the way. Here, too, they would get hints for their guidance. Hugging the shore as they went westward, they landed at Keynor on the face of the Selsea peninsula, and marched inland towards Regnum. The local forces, hastily gathering, met them at or within the border of the mighty wood, and fought the battle of Aldredes (Andred) lea, which may have ended in the fall of the town. If not, its walled area surely must have been overcrowded with fugitives. For the Britons were defeated, and the neighboring lowlands thrown open to the marauders. The home of luxury at Bignor, and others like it, no doubt then also met their ruin, along the lower hills.

Mr. Green supposes that the invaders became settlers forthwith, and made their way eastward by land, with the frantic haste of four miles to the year. But this, I think, is another instance of the error by ship-ignoring.

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They came in their long war-boats, and these, we may reasonably suppose, were kept for future use, the Saxon movements being, as yet, all near the sea. If they did not withdraw altogether with their plunder, it would be more natural to fortify and hold the neck of the peninsula where they first made land, as Hengist, in the beginning, had fortified and held the one exposed face of Thanet. Perhaps, for a time, some treaty may have been entered into, which would secure Ælle there. But we may be sure that before this the strengthened vigilance of Ambrose would have been drawn to Sussex, and an army fit to cope with the Saxons would be in waiting for any advance. Henry of Huntington says that the next attack was opposed by the kings and rulers of Britain. Dr. Guest inferred from this the presence of the imperator.

Eight years elapsed, the Saxon meanwhile making sure his foothold, most likely with reinforcements from Kent, which was quieter now, in the old age of Hengist, and with others from beyond the sea. A long line of prows, drawn well up on the sand, must have fringed the outer border of Ælle's little realm. With these at command, he awaited only a pretext or an opportunity to slip by those who were watching him,—perhaps at night,—and fall on some other part of the shore, unguarded. He found, probably, the spot in the little estuary of Mercredsburn. At any rate, he fought

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a battle on or near that stream, and apparently with the main force of his opponents. It may be that they had been keen enough to watch his secrecy, and swift enough to outspeed him. A Saxon repulse must have followed, and a severe one; for Ethelward does not claim it as a victory. Moreover, there was no further assault on the shore of Sussex for six years.

Then it befell at the extreme eastern end, where Octa's Kent folk—he ruled there now—were undoubtedly pressing. A great array of the Merscwara, as being nearest, very probably swelled the host of Ælle before Anderida.

That siege, with its wavering fortunes and its ferocious ending, made some such impression on the peoples of the island as was made upon the Greeks and their neighbors by the tale of Troy. The Britons, like the Trojans, hurried from the sack and the ruin, with lamentations which have died. The Saxons, like the earlier victors, lifted up their voices in exultant song. Through Henry of Huntington, interpreted by Dr. Freeman, their chant has come down to our own day. The former turned into prose the crude historic balladry which lived on near the spot in the memory and recital of men; the other has set it once more in the form of Saxon rhythm.

The main, or at least the distinguishing, feature of the contest is the persistent efforts at relief by forces

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out of the woodland. According to Mr. Green, these were miners of that district, hardy fellows, who, we may be sure, lent their aid. Yet by themselves they could not greatly trouble an army which was strong enough to attempt Anderida, one of the great military legacies of Rome. Nor would the British Guledig leave the very pearl of his border to its fate. We may fancy him pushing legion after legion, in threads of men, along the bridle-paths of Andred, where there was little by way of food; sending his skirmishers to hover in a swarm about the Saxon intrenchments; now dashing vehemently in force on some weak point which they had found for him; now luring detached bodies into the thickets, where his men fell on them with slaughter. By some one all this was done; why not by him?

But under such conditions he could not keep a sufficient army long in the field. Other frontiers may have needed his attention too. At times he must withdraw; and the Saxons, following, were at last able to plant a covering force which he could not dislodge. After that, hardly a bird of the air could get into the city. In the end, famine or treachery or some sudden assault made it a prey. And there was not a shadow of mercy. Yet probably some women were spared, they being of the spoil. Ethelward and Dr. Freeman's ballad-maker deny even this. But the earlier statement, "there was

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not one Brit left," hardly calls for more than the extermination of fighting men.

So notable a victory would be followed, of course, by rapid progress westward along the shore. All the restless adventurers in Kent would swell its volume. Northward, into the depths of the woods, they might work their way, setting fire to cabins and putting out furnaces, until checked on the dividing ridge by forces thrown out from London. But along the open land south of the woods there were more temptations, with less obstacles. Thither their retiring pioneers and their main body also would be drawn. At every small river-crossing they would be brought to a stand and a fight; but it was a fight that must win. Regnum kept them back, it may be, for a time, until it was stricken out of existence, where a new town grew up afterwards, bearing its conqueror's name. But, by the end of the third year from the taking of Anderida, they were probably near Southampton water, and stoutly resisted by an army from the Gwent; perhaps where the first valley beyond Chichester divides the narrow pass between forest and sea.

For now their aquatic flanking tactics began again, as when Reculver or Anderida had barred the way. Rightly to understand the conquest of Kent, Sussex, and Southern Wessex, we must conceive it as a continuing whole, achieved largely by the same soldiery,

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or their offspring, and generally in the same way. What they could not pass by land, they invariably went around by water, and British fastnesses and garrisons were often left for long in the rear of the conquered territory.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE FALL OF AMBROSE.

THIS time the new ground was broken by Cerdic, a chief of the Gewissas, and with a more than usually ominous breaking. A great arm of the Channel aided him to reach the fertile inland. There was no Andredwood for a barrier any more. When he grounded his prows by the mouth of the Itchin, he had seized the main artery of commercial England east of the Severn. Twenty miles of a broad Roman road would bring him easily to a great and wealthy city, little less than London in any regard.

We may fancy the dismay of Winchester (Venta Belgarum) at this apparition, and of all her sister cities, with the country lying about them: the dashing off of mounted messengers, the hurrying forward of one levy after another as fast as arms could be put in their hands. Dislodge the invaders; or, if not that, at least delay them, until we can gather forces for dislodgement! surely must have been the cry. Hardly any other plan was open to a people thus situated and taken by surprise. Each detachment that came up was flung at once headlong on Cerdic and his men.

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From the hour of their landing until nightfall they were kept nimble in repulsing these ever-increasing, ever-assailing enemies. They made no way inland, counting it a victory that they were not driven from their hold. Every day must have made the task before them more difficult. And surely the time cannot have been distant when Ambrose and his main army were to bar the way.

Why that agency was not sooner brought to bear upon them will easily appear. In all the barbarian assaults there was a certain co-operation, extending over a wider area than we usually bear in mind. At the beginning, when the Pict and the Scot confederated with the Saxon, three frontiers of Britain were assailed together. Afterwards, when Hengist made for London, Octa broke through towards York. And we may suppose that Cerdic was supported in his great western venture by more or less active campaigning all along the very irregular border.

The Kent people may have been threatening London from the Southwark side, or sailing and rowing across the Thames in detached parties to aid in the conquest of Essex. Other assailants—or possibly the same—may simultaneously have been struggling up from the sea-side along the Colne and the Chelm and the Stour, to occupy a fairer bit of country and assail Camulodunum. The north folk and south folk, avoid-

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ing the two or three great forts by the coast, were at their slow work of winning the Gwent of the Iceni, valley by valley, plateau by plateau. Probably its capital had already fallen and passed away. Perhaps they were drawing perilously near the gates of Cambridge.

Farther north, if we may believe Mr. Whittaker, were two independent and mighty inroads,—one by way of Durham and York, the other more to the west, overwhelming all Lancashire, about 488, and halting finally before the wall of Chester. But this city did not fall; nor did Corineum, nor did Verulam. No invader reached, as yet, any part of the Thames valley from that quarter. None disturbed the repose of the Severn. It is likely they were met and beaten in detail much farther north, or wore themselves out in marching and fighting where reinforcements were not to be had. But so long as they were still in the field, the very life of the country depended on preventing their junction. Probably this severance had not been assured when Cerdic opened the new chapter of the war. Possibly not even in time to save Winchester, for Dr. Guest, following monkish legend, puts within one year the descent at Cerdic's ore and the capture of that city. But the authority is not good, and so rapid a sequence is at least unlikely. The Saxon may even have withdrawn altogether, as Mr. Green would seem

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to imply; but in view of the importance of the position, we may be safer in a middle hypothesis. Where he had room, he would strengthen himself and stay. Reinforcements would be sent for. Other descents would be incited. If there were no thoroughfare by land, at least the opportunity could not be better for reconnoissance and worriment by sea. "Six years after their arrival they sailed around the western part of Britain, which is now called Wessex."

This surely is the adventure of men operating from a settled base; also of men who had by no means taken leave of the water-road. It is very significant in another way. By thus rounding Land's End and sailing up the Bristol channel, how must Cerdic's eyes have been set aflame with the ancient and growing commerce of the Severn. He had learned the way to Caerleon, where later "the neighing of the wild white horse set every gilded parapet shuddering." And how his rushing kestrels of the sea must have fluttered the white dove-flocks all along the double Damnonian shore!

But the Saxon arms were not turned that way in earnest yet. In the very next year there was a descent again, but near their main body, indeed much nearer than even the new conquest beside the Itchin. In the lapse of time the entry took a legendary shape, confusing a real conflict with fanciful word-explaining.

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The mythical Port figures in it, with damage to the faith of Mr. Pearson, who thereupon calls the whole record unhistorical. Under the same verbal spell, Sharon Turner long ago identified this episode with the death-battle of Geraint. Cries Llywarch, the man of eld, "Before Geraint, the enemy of oppression, I saw white horses jaded and gory, and after the shout a terrible resistance.

"In Llongborth I saw the weapons of men and blood fast dropping. . . .

"In Llongborth I saw Arthur, emperor and conductor of the toil."

But the fight at Portsmouth was before the day of Arthur's empire, though not long; and these historic legendary fancies may all drift away together. Yet no doubt there was a landing *vi et armis*,—a landing just where the Chronicle puts it, for that was in the logical necessity of the case. The great Port, as even the Latins called it, was in no need of any man's personality. It offered the one outlet between the South Saxons and the West Saxons for the commerce of the Gwent by sea. It formed the hard nucleus of the griping resistance which held by the throat the long-hungry column of the sons of Ælle. Smitten front and rear, it fell. The rush poured over it and by it into a broader country. The hand-clasp of Saxon and Saxon was given in a camp of Cerdic. Therewith

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ended the opening year (or the second) of the blind sixth century.

It was not an auspicious beginning for the Britons; yet the situation was not all against them. The fight had been going on, with little or no interruption, for more than fifty years, and still at the worst there was but one breach in the second line of defences. The sea-coast was all gone from the Humber to the Isle of Wight, except for a great fortress here and there living a life of its own; but the frame-work of woodland had taken its place, and hardy men filled and lined that natural barrier. In every gap stood some walled garrison-town, with Roman forethought in the lines and weight of its masonry.

London, greatest of all, held the very apex of a great V of wilderness, where the Thames broke through eastward, and her invincibility had all but turned the Cantwara into quiet, civilized men. Due north and due west from points not far away, the great wings of the forest ridges ran very nearly to the Trent and Itchin: that on the south a broad waste of timber and thicketry, ill-explored, haunted by every kind of brute savagery, bearing for its very name the absence of all ordered human life; the other, a degree less impassable by nature, but made equally strong by the greater number of its defenders. The Ermine street, one of the most vital roads of the island, ran a little behind the

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crest. Others opened into or from it, or made their crossing. Men went and came in numbers, and towns had grown up of that passage. Here and there a large city like Verulam filled a clearing in the forest. And in those days of menace, earthworks and block-houses must have been freely strung along wherever there was more than usual apprehension.

Towards York the line had indeed repeatedly given way, and, although intermittently re-established, it was now probably well back to Sherwood forest, the Peak, and the desert, following thence the backbone of the island as far as the southern wall, where the grandsons of Cunedda and the unconquerable men of Caerluel were perhaps keeping up half independently a warfare of their own. Even north of this, two-thirds of the country were yet in British hands, if Mr. Skene's maps be fair criteria of it in later times; but here, the temptation being less, the attack was no doubt light also. From so remote a quarter no enemy could gain access to the heart of the land.

But there had long been danger from Lindsey by way of Lindom and Leicester, from York by way of Chester; and it was very great and urgent now along the quite open frontier to the north of Southampton water. Only a thin screen of bushy woodlands here, a low crest-line, with valleys breaking through. Before long even these were passed, and the invaders

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entered on the fair and fertile upland which had been the chief heritage of the Belgae.

May we suppose that the great British Guledig had foreseen this and taken his measures accordingly? There was but one adequate way of defending the indefensible, and that way he had chosen. All material bulwarks failing, he would and did erect a rampart of zeal. Where the Saxon saw only a fertile and inviting land, unwalled, thrown open to the air, his for all ravage and plunder, he came to feel the presence of a fighting holy of holies. The rich Gwent was there, agricultural, pastoral, astir with the overland commerce of a half-score of cities; but there, also, was the great sanctuary of Britain, the monastery imperial, the choir of the dominion, which Ambrose himself had founded, and of which he was proud to be the titular head. The monks of Amesbury must have been worth another army.

But armies of the ordinary sort were gathering. The three-mile circle of Calleva was held in such force that no eastward movement of the invaders took place for many years. The sheer cliffs of Old Sarum hardly needed a garrison. From the territory of the Four Towns, from the valley of the Severn, from the westward trend of Dynaint, perhaps from the mountains and the far northern cities, recruits may have been steadily pouring into the great camp of Ambrose, by the border of Salisbury Plain.

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But in the years of watching and waiting, the crucial strain upon the Celt was the strain of holding together. There was nothing less than life and death in it now, and the desperate ingenuity of an aged man must have been sorely put to it for means to stay the melting. More than ever he would strive to give them something of the permanent coherence, as well as the form, of the old legions. More than ever he would stimulate the *esprit du corps* of his own equestrian bodyguard, itself a legacy of Rome, but now changing to a more individual array,—princely men of sword and spear, where each was a younger comrade of his imperial lord and held worthy to lead men into battle.

Even the sports of Rome, in a nobler development, were made the means of tempting the uneasy to remain and the more distant soldiery to draw near, while all were hardened for the rough work ahead. Whatever the embellishment of Norman days, we may find a reasonable independent explanation of the fantastic chivalry, the wealth of adventure, the incessant mimic battling, which distinguish in poetry and legend this lost life of Britain while still free. The Saxon had never anything half so winning.

But the Saxon was set in mind on scattering it utterly, and making what it guarded his own. Cerdic felt the gathering before him, and drew, in his turn, on the long warlike fringe of settlement as far east as

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Pevensey, and even from what may be called the home land of the Caint. Wherever a Saxon was, there, too, was aid for the daring founder of Wessex. Yet seven years elapsed before he felt strong enough to make a great forward movement.

Guided by nomenclature, legend, and later record, we may suppose that the British irregular forces occupied the forests of Charwood and Waltham Chase in the new region which the Saxons had won; while the main army, under Ambrose in person, was drawn up either south of Winchester or more probably south-east of Amesbury. In spite of his eighty years, the fiery imperator is said to have begun the battle with a great onslaught, which was fatally successful, for it removed him and one whole wing of the British array beyond hope of aid. Matters went ill behind him before he turned, and then there were enemies both in front and rear. The fight lasted long, even against such odds, but in the end he had five thousand of his fighting men to bear him company, and Stonehenge for their monument.

Yet the host of Cerdic must have been shattered in shattering, and most likely withdrew towards Winchester, which may have yielded in a panic, following the evil news. It can hardly have been taken sword in hand, for one of the more notable churches became a heathen temple, and the city continued in human occu-

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pancy, instead of being reduced to ruin and ashes. Beyond this and a crescent of the fertile land about it, the Saxon gained little. Probably Owain, who may have been Uthyr the Terrible, showed too savage a front for further molestation.

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CHAPTER VIII.

ARTHUR—WHO AND WHERE?

OWAIN and Uthyr are names which fill the gap, real or assumed, between Ambrose and Arthur. Dr. Guest believes in the former as the son and the heir of the great Aurelius; but Uthyr is to him only a personified verbal error. Geoffrey, he supposes, mistook "Arthur Mabuter" for "Arthur, son of Uter," whereas it should be translated the "terrible child,"—a fit characterization of precocious valor. And having discovered a parent for Arthur, he was bound to invent the parental biography or leave his history incomplete.

If this be true, Taliessin and his contemporaries must have blundered in the same way. They refer unmistakably "to the son of Uthyr" in one poem, and to the "servant of Uthir" in another; while a third, from beginning to end, is "the Death-Song of Uthyr." I am not quite sure how these would stand in the final revision of Mr. Stephens, which was never completed, but they all seem to be accepted as authentic by Mr. Skene, a still greater authority.

To Geoffrey, if he believed what he tells us, the matter presented itself quite clearly; and Malory fol-

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lowed his version. Uther was the younger brother of Ambrose; Arthur was the son of Uther by miraculous personation. We all know the story, not without older parallels, but it is unbelievable now.

Mr. Pearson has another solution. Uther was Ambrosius himself. Arthur was the son of both, or either, as you will, and succeeded to a "diminished sovereignty," with his capital in the "Roman works" of Camelot.

But Gildas, who was almost a contemporary and given over to adoration of Ambrosius, never seems to have heard of any Uther, identical or otherwise. Nennius, coming after, is equally silent. Owain fares no better at their hands. What we learn of either before Geoffrey, must be through Welsh pedigrees or Cumbrian poetry. The former do not claim to be inspired. The inspiration of the latter is uncertain. In this uncertainty, at least, we may follow them, with the one suggestion of identity thrown out already.

And now of Arthur. Whence was he? What did he? Wherein consisted the real historic outline and body of the greatest imaginative development which the world has ever seen? The Welsh of the Middle Ages believed him to be Cornish beyond question, with his chief seat in the beginning at Celliwig, where the remains of "Arthur's castle" are still found. Later, we find him designated as hereditary king of the Silures;

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or as probably the nephew of a southwestern princelet; or as the son of Merig, a chief in Glamorgan. Brittany has always claimed him for her own. Turning far northward, tradition is loud of him all about Carlisle; and Scotch thoughtfulness and thoroughness, in almost unexampled array, have been exerted in proving, as nearly as they can be proven, the claims of the region which afterwards became Strathclyde.

Perhaps it is well that there should be this permanent diversity. Perhaps there was a subtle discernment in the more poetic myth-tale of his career, which wrapped it in glamour from the mist of Tintagil to the mystery of Avalon. And yet we cannot but long to know more.

Whether he came from the northwest or the southwest, he soon took rank as a great leader of men, and this must have been for one or two reasons. Either he inherited supremacy, or it was given to him by choice for what was in him and what he had done. These have ever been the ways of attaining such success.

Nennius is the first who throws any light exactly on this point. He says that Arthur was chosen to command; chosen twelve times for merit of his own; chosen in preference to many others of more exalted birth. "Then it was that the magnanimous Arthur, with all the kings and military force of Britain, fought against the Saxons. And though there were many

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more noble than himself, yet he was twelve times chosen their commander, and was as often conqueror."

Now, assuredly such language could not be applied to the son or the nephew of Ambrosius Aurelianus. In all the island, who were "more noble" than these? The witness of Gildas, though vague enough, is of similar purport. He berates the descendants of the great Roman champion for degeneracy; he fixes his own birth-year by the crowning victory of Mount Badon; but he does not in any way bring together the two lines of thought. The explanation is not far to seek. If Arthur had been really akin to Ambrose, how exultantly would his praises have been sounded! If Arthur were distinctively a Briton, how obstinately the embittered monkish partisan might set his lips against the least utterance of that name!

In rebuking one of the minor sovereigns, who strove to retain something of Arthurian prestige after the breaking up of the Arthurian empire, he makes use of language hitherto overlooked, which indicates that he was well aware of more than he would say. "And thou, too, Cuneglasse," he cries, "thou bear, thou rider and ruler of many, thou guider of the chariot which is the receptacle of the bear." Now, "the bear" is a translation of "Arth," and what can the chariot be but great "Arthur's wain," wheeling, even as now, in the heavens? Stated in full, it might be, "And thou, too,

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Cuneglasse, thou would-be Arthur, thou rider and ruler of many, thou that assumest the state and imperial progress of the mighty departed, why art thou fallen into the filth of thy former naughtiness?" Yet not even to point a moral can he bring himself to mention, out of the Latin, that Celt of hardly decipherable origin, whose genius had stayed the Saxon flood and made Britain illustrious.

We turn to the testimony of the bards. They were pre-eminently the wake-singers, the celebrators of the far-descended dead, the feast-singers who exalted the living in their pedigree. But, with one doubtful exception, already noted, they tell us nothing whatever of Arthur's ancestry. In Llywarch, least professional, most indisputably antique, most noble and touching and soldierly of them all, the prowess of the Guledig appears, with little more. "Arthur and brave men who hewed down," he sings in one place; "Arthur did not retreat" (according to Mr. Stephens's revision), in another.

Taliessin, more courtly, more pictorial, but far less vehemently in earnest, brings before us the external splendor, the adventurousness, the human-kindly attributes of the hero. "Arthur distributed gifts,"—"Arthur of anxious memory." "When we went with Arthur, a splendid labor." "His swift irruptions and his red purple, and his assault over the wall."

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"Arthur and the fair Cai . . . before the chiefs of Emrais I saw Cai."

Later from various bards we hear of "the steed of Arthur," "the prowess of Arthur," "a mystery to the world, the grave of Arthur." He is cited by Aneurin as the accepted standard of heroism, the test, the unsurpassable ideal. In all this, hardly one word consistent with a glorious lineage; not one inconsistent with a most glorious life. In the triads, too (those that are really ancient), and the older elements of the tales everything seems to point the same way. He may have been frowned upon in certain quarters for being a brilliant upstart; but they left to later generations the depreciation of his merit by a royal family tree. For in truth he *won* the purple, and defended it as he defended the land and the faith.

But these allusions prove and disprove much more. He cannot have been, unless at the very first, "the petty prince of a Devonian principality." He must have been more than the provincial hero of the Scotch lowlands. If he were ever in Armorica, he went there. If he held his most brilliant court at Caerleon, it may have been because Wales, too, had a seaboard needing his presence and watchful eye. The frequent recurrence of his name in so many parts of Britain—hundreds of places bear or have borne it—may surely be taken as some evidence that his coming and going

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were once everywhere matters of expectancy and moment. The Britons award him, in legend, a superhuman celerity of movement, favoring this view.

But there is more positive and explicit testimony. In the Red Book of Hergest are the "Triads of Arthur and his Warriors," which, according to Mr. Skene, do not lie under suspicion. They begin thus: Three tribe thrones of the island of Prydain (Britain). Arthur, the chief lord at Menevia, and David, the chief bishop, and Maelgwn Gwynedd, the chief elder. Arthur, the chief lord at Kelliwig in Cornwall, and Bishop Betwini, the chief bishop, and Caradawg Vriechvras, the chief elder. Arthur, the chief lord at Penrionyd in the north, and Cyndeyrn Garthwys, the chief bishop, and Gurthmwl Guledig, the chief elder." Here we have a well-developed organization of provinces, with a lieutenant or viceroy over each and a spiritual inspirer to keep the zeal of the fighting-men astir.

Yet as to such matters there is a mighty bias in the place of birth. How inevitably the gravest Briton appropriates his Arthur, even if originally repudiating the former name! By no means shall any other corner of the island be allowed an equal right. Professor Freeman, for one, admits the leaning very candidly, and his northern opponents may as well do the same. May an Anglo-American—absent a quarter of a millennium from the old home—be allowed to give a

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casting vote? It would certainly accord with the general understanding of English-speaking and Welsh-speaking people, and the plain historic statement of Nennius. Local tradition has its value, and a great value; but we cannot ignore the general tradition of a race. Arthur was imperator of Britain.

We need not suppose any sudden bound from the shadow into sovereignty. Mr. Whittaker asserts that his first northern victories were won as the lieutenant of Ambrose, though commanding an army. This granted, there is nothing to surprise us in his further advancement. Yet there may well have been great towns and great people who did not take kindly to the rule of a new man from the west. A legend of London seems to hint at some such unwillingness.

There is also an old poem—a metrical dialogue translated by Mr. Stephens—in which Guinevere is made to banter her suitor with his obscurity. She affects in the beginning not to know him at all. She doubts his prowess, with a gently-smiling face. She ridicules his steed and taunts him into boasting. At last she relents a little and graciously admits having seen him somewhere once upon a time,—yes, at Celliwig,—"a man of moderate stature dispensing wine to his friends."

In another, imperfectly preserved by the Black Book of Caermarthen, she summarily denies him admittance to her home, although accompanied by "the blessed

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Cai." The sportive lady even insinuates by a play on words that the blessing is of the wine-cellar, and that her visitors are more merry than safe. Such were the trials of the youthful Arthur when he would a-wooing go. Or rather such were the trials that seemed probable to those who lived we know not just how long after.

Yet, in this love-making, instinct may have aided wisdom to build up his power. Geoffrey makes him choose his bride from "a noble Roman family" and from the household of "Duke Cador, of Cornwall,"—undoubtedly Caradoc Vriechvras. An alliance like this would all but obliterate the two chief dangers of his position,—the jealousy of the Roman party and the resentment of the slighted.

But he went much farther in making amends to that prince "of the brawny arm." The holy city of Amesbury became Caer Caradoc, where every Saxon inroad found the blood of Ambrose in the post of honor. He was accorded, as we have seen, a kind of underkingship in the whole southwest. In the only verses attributed to Arthur, Caradoc Vriechvras is named as one of the three "battle knights" of Britain. And when the great imperator lay dying at Glastenbury after Camlan, he passed the sovereignty, we are told, to Constantine, the son or brother of Caradoc.

There could be nothing of selfish planning in such a

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transfer at such a time. Nor are we justified in supposing that there had been before. The profoundest policy is the instinct of the noblest minds. Generosity, faith, and enthusiasm work in line with other great forces of the universe. As he was situated, this became emphatically true. All his zeal for religion, all his love of country, all his personal affection, all that went to make him "the magnanimous Arthur," must find expression in aiding his great designs. If he showed astuteness in matters of detail, it was the better for all.

He was the darling of the Celt from the beginning. Later, the Roman came to him and the young queen. The "loricated legions" had been won early by the hard fighting they had seen him do. The most zealous churchman could ask nothing better than a monarch who was so pre-eminently a champion of the cross, who set the bishop everywhere side by side with the local king, and went vehemently into battle with the Queen of Heaven painted upon his shield. It needed only victory for every faction to make him its hero above all. And victory he gave them in abundance.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE WARS OF ARTHUR—IN THEORY.

Says Nennius, "The first battle in which he was engaged was at the mouth of the river Gleni (Vatican MS. Glein). The second, third, fourth, and fifth were on another river, by the Britons called Duglas, in the region Linius. The sixth on the river Bassas. The seventh in the wood Celidon, which the Britons call Cat Coit Celidon. The eighth was near Gurnion castle, where Arthur bore the image of the holy Virgin, mother of God, upon his shoulders, and, through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Mary, put the Saxons to flight and pursued them the whole day with great slaughter. The ninth was at the city of Legion, which is called Cair Lion. The tenth was on the banks of the river Trat Treuroit. The eleventh was on the mountain Breguoin, which we call Cat Bregion. The twelfth was a most severe contest, when Arthur penetrated to the hill of Badon. In the engagement nine hundred and forty fell by his hand alone, no one but the Lord affording him assistance. In all these engagements the Britons were successful, for no strength can avail against the will of the Almighty."

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This list obviously is not complete. The twenty years after Mount Badon can hardly have been years of inactivity. The nine hundred victims are nearly as credible as an uninterrupted career of success over such enemies and in so long a reign. Besides, he positively did not drive out the Saxons. They outlasted him, and in the end appropriated all the lowlands of Britain. We turn to them for the other side of the story.

They have nothing whatever to say for six years after the death of Natan Leod. Then (514) "Stuf and Wihtgar land in Cerdic's Ore and suddenly make war on the Britons, whom they put to flight and themselves remain masters of the field." This has the look of a forcible reopening of communication with Cerdic, who may have been for a time cut off from the shore by a force approaching laterally through Waltham Chase.

"Five years after (519) Cerdic and Cynric fought a battle against the Britons at Cerdic's ford, on the river Avene, and that same year nominally began to reign." This was no doubt near Charford, on the Hampshire Avon. It may have been in defence of the left flank and rear. Or they may have been detected in an attempt to enter by surprise the British territory through the forest of Charwood.

"Eight years after, they renew the war against the Britons."

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No particulars are given. There are no other entries of operations on the mainland for more than forty years. Thus, omitting the Isle of Wight, we have, during the Arthurian period, the mention of but two battles, both at the south, and only one of these is insisted on as a Saxon victory.

Llywarch Hen, with a very soldierly frankness, admits a defeat at Llongborth. "Before they *were overcome* they committed slaughter." But we do not know with any certainty when or where the battle of Llongborth was. The name would fit any haven of shipping, according to one translation; any long port, according to another. Certain villages bear it still; but such coincidences are often misleading, especially where the nomenclature is common and descriptive. Langport in Hampshire has thus been suggested. So has the Charford battle. Mr. Pearson favors Dartmouth. The guess of Mr. Sharon Turner (Portsmouth) has already been given. But Geraint was slain at Llongborth, and one of the earlier of the Welsh tales, which are called Mabinogion, represents him as living until Arthur habitually held court at Caerleon. This is likely to have been after the Mount Badon encounter, the date of which is placed by Dr. Guest at 520, by most others at 516. As the mention of Geraint's death-fight is so isolated, we can never hope to know much more about it.

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Later writers add a few details, more or less reliable, from the common traditional memory and opinion of their time. Thus, Higden, quoted by Dr. Guest: "Men read in some chronicles that Cerdicus fought oft with Arthur, and if he were overcome he rose up oft stronger to fight, and at last, after six and twenty years from Cerdicus's coming, Arthur was weary and noyful of him, and gave him Hampshire and Somerset and called that country Wessex. And he made faith and swore to him." This would end the war at the south naturally, soon after the great battle of Bath Hill. Rudbourne, we are told, also mentions this treaty. Gildas does not, but plainly regards that victory as opening an era of comparative quiet and well-being. It has been commonly called the Peace of Mount Badon.

Here we find Cerdic put forward for the chief antagonist of Arthur, as might be expected. In the country between the two northern walls that *rôle* is given to Ossa Cyllelaur, most likely a descendant of the great Ebissa, who probably took command after Octa became king of Kent. Geoffrey of Monmouth makes Arthur hurry from Bath to Alcluyd, then under menace, and fight a series of battles with Scots and Picts and Saxons in the vicinity of Lake Lomond, the reconquest of all Valentia being the final result. Mr. Stuart-Glennie and Mr. Skene have fully shown that

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the orally-transmitted history of the region goes far to bear out even this claim. Edinburgh and Dumbarton are alike "Arthurian localities;" and the same is true of many an intervening river-side and stronghold.

But the list of Nennius will ever be, as it has been, the chief text of explainers. There is no reason to doubt its general accuracy. The facts were very conspicuous. They were put on paper within a century and a half or thereabout after the death of Arthur. It is natural to suppose that they had been preserved in the same way, as well as orally, through the intervening period. They are alluded to briefly, as we might speak of Lutzen or Prestonpans, or the storming of Quebec.

But what was very plain in the minds of men twelve centuries ago has become a deplorable entanglement. You turn to the map of England, and the names are duplicated, and more than duplicated, in the most diverse quarters; or they are confusingly approximated; or they are gone. Moreover, the annotations and interpretations of the MSS., by early and unknown hands, vary in the several copies. Nor are men agreed as to the requirements of the situation, the relative position and strength of the contending parties, or the probable sequence of events.

Dr. Guest supposes that the Cat Coit Celidon and the battle at the mouth of the river Gleni were in the

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neighborhood of the Cherwell valley, not very far from the famous White Horse of the south. He gives no reason, beyond the fact that it was a convenient westward road for the Saxons to take. He thinks it was a favorite with them. But others have found the Gleni in Lincolnshire, in Northumberland, and well over the Scotch border; while Celidon (meaning merely a wood) is equally identified with the forest of Selkirk and with the wilderness between Penrith and Carlisle. The eighth battle, we are told, was either in Cornwall or Durham, or Norfolk, or the far northern Dale of Woe insisted on by Mr. Skene. An ancient marginal note of one version of Nennius identifies the mountain Breguoin with Cadbury Hill in Somerset; but Messrs. Skene and Stuart-Glennie put it nearly at the other end of the island. Trath Traroit is the mouth of the Ribble (near Liverpool), *or* the arms of the Brue around Glastenbury, *or* the sands by "Castle Dangerous." Caerleon becomes at will Exeter, or Chester, or "some town at the north," probably Alcluyd. As for Bath Hill, it seems to be found almost everywhere except where in reason it ought to be. After this manner is confusion scientifically confounded.

The contestants turn for ammunition to the writers of older time; but they turn not always wisely, and the result now and then sets humor astir. Thus Mr. Stuart-Glennie, in the heat of his advocacy of Boudon

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Hill, gravely calls Layamon into court to witness that "the Avon" flowed by Mount Badon. Surely,—and there is a Devonshire Avon, a Hampshire Avon, an Avon which sees Bath and probably "Bath Hill" reflected in its tide. Is it not possible that Layamon had in mind some other stream than the all-but-unknown Avon which empties into the Firth of Forth?

So far as I know, the earliest attempt at a consecutive explanatory account of those campaigns will be found in Geoffrey of Monmouth. He ignores the first battle altogether, perhaps finding it unmanageable, and begins apparently with the second. The Saxons, according to him, held the northeast, having "subdued all that part of the island which extends from the Humber to the sea of Cathness." Arthur was "then fifteen years old, but a youth of such unparalleled courage and generosity joined with that sweetness of temper and innate goodness as gained him universal love." He took the aggressive, marching from Caerleon, against York. The Saxon leader came forth to meet him. They encountered by the Duglas. The Saxons were defeated, pursued to York, and besieged there. A relieving force was waylaid by a detachment under Duke Cador and put to flight. A very much stronger Saxon army came up from the coast, and Arthur reluctantly withdrew to London.

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There he was strengthened by reinforcements from Brittany, and took the field again. Lincoln (Caer-ludcoit) was then closely besieged by the enemy. He fell upon them with great slaughter. They retreated to the "wood of Celidon," where they made a stand. He felled the trees all around them, and began a regular leaguer. They endured this for three days, and then, "ready to starve," surrendered. He allowed them to leave the island on parole. This they broke, and, sailing around to the coast of Devonshire, landed at Totness. Before he could return from the north, great devastation was done as far as the walls of Bath. He found them there, drove them to a neighboring "mountain," and stormed it after a great slaughter. This was the ruin of the Saxons, the very last of them being slain or taken by Caradoc in pursuit.

This narrative is obviously incomplete. Why, with Nennius before him, has Geoffrey nothing to say of the other battles? There would be no great difficulty in conjuring up some tale for each and all. It reads as though he were merely elucidating the most conspicuous items of popular memory. But, at any rate his account has a value as showing the common British opinion of 1147. Its Duglas was in Lancashire; its "forest of Celidon" was within marching distance of Lincoln; its Bath Hill was the hill by Caer-badus, the Aquæ Solis of Rome. Its Arthur

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conquered first at the north, afterwards at the south, later still in the lowlands of Scotland.

In the eighteenth century a more elaborate attempt was made by Whittaker, the Manchester historian, to whom Dr. Guest was afterward, indebted for much that is distinctive in matter and method. Thus, each of them identifies Mount Badon with Badbury Hill, shifting the victory to the border of Wessex. Also, they agree in the identification of Ambrosius with Natan-Leod. Whittaker also set the example of pedestrian investigation, studying topography and tradition on the spot. With some obvious errors and many misleadings of fancy, he has the merit of being nearer the truth as a whole than any other inquirer.

He believed that Arthur first encountered the Saxons in the valley of the Dee, under the beleaguered walls of Chester (Caer Ligion), the ninth battle being out of its true place in the list. They were driven beyond the Mersey, he supposes, but rallied on the next line of defence, where its tributary, the Duglas, comes down from the hills of the northwest. "Linuis," the region of the lake, is explained by the presence of a great mere, then the most conspicuous feature of South Lancashire, but now drained away. What we call "the Lake Country" was not so very distant.

The defeated army awaited Arthur amid the ruins,

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it may be within the Roman walls, of the capitol of the Sistuntii, which they or some earlier invasion had wasted utterly. The site was afterward, occupied by the village of Blackrode. We have no details of the conflict; "the Duglas ran red all the way to Wigan." So said local tradition more than twelve hundred years afterwards. In the end the Saxons gave way, following the stream downward through the woods and the night.

Arthur, following, brought them again to bay where Wigan now stands, along the hill-sides and the borders of the thickets. The cottagers told Whittaker of ancient warriors, in garb long unknown to men, who still revisited as phantoms the scene where they had fought and died.

The fugitives were again driven from cover, hunted over the ridge, and yet once more overtaken and fallen upon with great slaughter. Along their line of flight a belt fifty rods in length by seven wide was thickly sown with the bones of men. Horseshoes by the hundred-weight have been gathered there. What remained of the Saxon army scattered through the woods and the marshes.

But individually they were helpless; they had no right to look for mercy, and they were far from home. In sheer desperation, those who crossed the river drew together in a small peninsula, the neck of which they

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fortified. Here they were safe for the moment, but hopelessly in a trap. The situation was repeated when Andrew Jackson all but exterminated an army of the Creeks at the Horseshoe bend of the Tallapoosa. It may be that hardly more than one Saxon carried the news of the four ruinous battles on the Duglas to the forces gathering in Westmoreland.

Winter intervened. The spring found them holding the line of the Pesa, a stream which crosses the road to Englewood at the southern border of that county. Arthur found them also, fell upon them, and drove them to take refuge in the depth of the forest. Here, between the Loder and the Erimot, they built up about them a stone intrenchment, using the loose flint of that district. He surrounded and utterly destroyed them.

In the next campaign he crossed the hills and routed a third army near Binchester in Durham, thus ending another and more eastward Saxon invasion. The defeated enemy withdrew into Northumberland; but he tore this region from them also, a few months later, by a victory between the Till and the Glen. This is the Nennius battle of the Gleni, which Whittaker restores, he thinks, to the proper place in the list.

Opening the next campaign, he fairly crossed the wall into what we now call Scotland, overthrew the Saxons there settled at some point on the road to Edinburgh,

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and completed their subjection by storming that all but impregnable rock fortress.

Then he was elected Pendragon (Guledig or Imperator) in the place of Ambrose, who had recently been slain, and hurried away to the work of reorganizing the defeated southern army. As his men grew more confident he directed two attempts—one through Waltham chase, one through Charwood—on the communications of Cerdic.

These were foiled, and the latter advanced in turn as far as the fortified hill of Badbury, commanding the junction of two Roman roads. While the Saxons were endeavoring to take this place, Arthur fell upon them with his legions, and did such execution that they made no further attempt in that quarter for the next thirty years.

There is much to be said for this scheme. In all that relates to Lancashire it has the support of the evidence of the soil and the evidence of tradition. He collected the legendary deposit in time to save what would probably now be gone. Sharon Turner gave him the credit of definitely settling the Duglas battle-fields, if no more. But in the historical world is anything final?

He is probably right also in his identification of the Pesa with the Bassas. The change from Prydain to Britain affords a striking parallel. We may go with

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him also into the Englewood for Cat Coit Celidon, and agree that Arthur at one time captured Edinburgh. Also, it seems true that Arthur went south and fought there, after a series of brilliant northern successes.

But the weak points are obvious. If we may transpose the first and ninth battles of the list, why not others as well? Any theory of them might be proved in that way. Moreover, if the Saxon column of the west had reached the very gates of Chester, why was their eastern column awaiting an enemy in the neighborhood of the wall? Again, if there were such a fearful slaughter and rout at Badbury, why did not Arthur resume possession of the Hampshire coast? There is no evidence of his having done so. Cerdic found it British; but he made it, and left it, Saxon.

Mr. Skene takes a radically different view. According to him, Arthur began by advancing into Scotland from near Carlisle. He met and defeated the Saxons (Angles) where the small river Irvine receives the lesser waters of the Ayrshire Glen. The "great struggle" of the four battles belongs to the Lennox (Linuis) region, near one or the other of two Duglas rivers which empty into Lake Lomond. The hill Ben Arthur commemorates his final victory. "He advances along the strath of the Carron as far as Dunipace, where on the Bonny the fifth (sixth?) battle is fought; and from (*sic*) thence marches south through Tweed-

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dale or the Wood of Celyddon, fighting a battle by the way, till he comes to the valley of the Gala, or Wodale, where he defeats the Saxons of the east coast. He then proceeds to master four great fortresses,—first, Kairlium, or Dumbarton; next, Stirling, by defeating the enemy in the tratheu Tryweryd, or Carse of Stirling; then Mynyd Agned, or Edinburgh, the great stronghold of the Picts here called Cathbregion; and lastly, Boudon Hill, in the centre of the country between these strongholds."

Mr. Stuart-Glennie is of the same mind in all essentials, after a personal mile by mile investigation of that region and its people. The first suggestion of this Scotch theory came, he supposes, from a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1842. Certainly it is of recent date, unless in the sense that fragments which may be fitted into it have long survived among the peasantry. But they will also accord with a more comprehensive scheme, as I shall endeavor to show.

The attainments and ability of the gentlemen named call for thoughtful consideration of whatever they may advance. Otherwise there would be a strong temptation to regard this particular deliverance as a mere freak of fancy, elaborately justified after the fact. One would greatly wish to know the name of that seductive gentleman of 1842, who has played with Scotch brains the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

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For see, if Arthur conquered so sweepingly, without one break in the tide, the great fighting country between the two walls and the two seas,—Angles, Picts, Dalraidan Scots, and all,—is it in any way credible that he would have rested there, with nearly the whole of northern England in the hands of the Saxon? But we have yet to hear of a southward campaign for the recapture of Caer Ebrauc, of Cymry hurrying from Lothian and Ayrshire to take in the rear the troublers of Durham and Chester. And again, how comes it that Gildas, who does not even know the name of Carlisle, and has but the vaguest notion of the great wall itself and the country about it, is so marvellously well informed concerning Boudon Hill? And yet again, why has all Somersetshire even until now remained full of the doings of King Arthur? No supposition of migration from Cumbria into northern Wales, of infiltration from northern Wales into southern,—see "Encyclopædia Britannica,"—will be any answer to questions like these.

Nor is this all. The Scotch hypothesis offers no explanation of the long palsy which bound the Saxons of Wessex. As little does it help us to understand why there was no overwhelming rush of hostile Deirans from the northeast after the death of Ambrose. What name shall we give the power that held the Saxon of Yorkshire and the Saxon of Hampshire

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equally by the throat for more than a generation? If Arthur were indeed far away triumphing in the country between the walls, then assuredly there was another and a greater Arthur in central and southern Britain.

Mr. Pearson has reverted partly to the scheme of Geoffrey; partly also to the southern limitations of Dr. Guest. With the latter he omits all hypotheses of northern and midland warfare. With the former he assumes the disembarkation of a Saxon army on the coast of Devon. Geraint gathers the militia of the district, and resists them at Dartmouth, which is Llongborth. He is slain, his levies give way, and the Saxons march on Exeter, which has to do duty as the "city of the legion."

Arthur came up in time to save it by fighting and winning his ninth battle. Marching across country, the two bodies of men clashed together at the Brue or the Brent, and yet again at Cadbury (Camelot), Arthur's capital. "Flushed with victory" (why?), the Saxons then made for Bath. "Here, fighting with diminished forces against Arthur's whole host, they sustained a crushing defeat."

This appeared about one year previous to the Four Ancient Books of Wales; but I am not sure which theory is the more recent. The chief merit of Mr. Pearson lies in calling attention again to the accessibility of Bath by another road than through Hamp-

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shire; but having carried the nautical explanation so far, it is a pity he did not see how profitably it may be carried farther.

Comparing these various explanatory narratives, we see that they, after all, have several characteristics in common. Finding the list of Nennius compressed into a single section, they tend towards a rapid sequence, battle following battle in one brief campaign. Excepting one or two, they confine the Saxon altogether to the land, and there is not a single one who will take him otherwise to Cair Lion. Hence we have all sorts of Bath-hills and Legion cities, with as many ways of getting to them. Finally, the recent critics fail to grasp the situation at the beginning as a whole. It was not very different from that which afterwards confronted Alfred.

As to sequence, we must remember that each item loses prominence when events come crowding. Fierce and heavy fighting may recur with slight interval, but the links in the chain have then no distinctiveness. A good case in point is the long duel between Grant and Lee, wherein daily, for weeks, great masses of men were hurled against each other, as the parallel lines of march went slanting across Virginia, until one-fourth of the assailing army had been consumed. We call it the Wilderness campaign, for it opened there; but how many, besides special students of war, could pretend to

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name, one by one, those tremendous clashes of arms. We may be sure that a Nennius, writing a hundred years hence, would make a lump of them all in the Wilderness and pass on at a leap to Appomattox. In like manner the idea of Napoleon recalls a string of salient names,—Toulon, the bridge of Arcola, Marengo, the Pyramids, Austerlitz, Jena, Borodino, Moscow, Leipsic, Waterloo. A chronicler of the olden time was merely one who put down events like these, which had individually fixed themselves in the popular memory.

Nennius, in four lines, recites four notable victories of Vortimer, though we have good reason to believe that the fighting extended over more than ten years. When he comes to Arthur we find no difference in the mode of narration. There are twelve battles, each, as before, representing the crisis or most conspicuous feature of a campaign. This, at least, is a fair inference.

As to the overland illusion, it has been more fertile than any other in fancied obstacles and mistaken theory. The Saxon assault was habitually ambidextrous, by land and water. The army pressed forward; the navy swept by to land a force in the enemy's rear. The Britons found themselves between fires, or were attacked where they had felt very secure. The detour over the water grew larger, until in A.D. 500 the

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Saxons sailed around the peninsula Cornwall and came up along the western shore. It was a fresh and inviting one. Thereafter they took that way again and again. The greatest lure in all Britain was the now growing wealth of its main outlet by the Severn sea.

As the Danes came at Alfred from the northeast and southeast, the Saxons came likewise at Arthur. Each ruler for a time had his head-quarters in or near Somerset. Each took the offensive-defensive with success. Arthur had against him the necessity of resisting two other lines of invasion. He had in his favor the certainty of a strong reinforcement if he could break through to the far northern Britons. Chieftains like Urien were there, and so was whatever remained of the old cosmopolite soldier-blood.

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CHAPTER X.

THE WARS OF ARTHUR—AS THEY WERE.

Let us see if we can clear away the mist a little. In the battle-section of Nennius we find the names of two cities, both well known then and existing now. Surely good sense would suggest that we should give them their ordinary application, unless this involves a *real* impossibility. When Geoffrey tells us that Arthur was crowned by Dubricius, Archbishop of Legions, have we any doubt that Caerleon-upon-Usk is meant? When the name Cairlion occurs in a list of the Celtic city names, elsewhere given by Nennius, the identification is no less prompt and certain. To avoid any possibility of mistake, he carefully puts both titles together. It was "at Urbs Legionis, which is called Cair Lion." One MS. indeed makes this "Urbs Leogis," which may be a misspelling, or an attempt of the transcriber to harmonize the Latin title with lion. But Legionis is generally admitted to be the correct rendering; and surely we need not go farther afield. Deva truly was Caer Ligion, but never Cair Lion nor Cair Leon; and it became Chester; whereas the great historic city of

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Legions never has ceased, however shrunken, to be Caerleon.

As to Mons Badonicus, Mount Badon, Bath Hill, we might rest on the assurance of the Durham Gildas MS. that it is near the Severn. The passage does not occur in the only other MS. copy now extant. This, we are told, came from the monks of Glastenbury. But who at Glastenbury needed to be told the whereabouts of Bath? So far away as Durham, there was possibly more need to be explicit. Briefly, if Gildas wrote the sentence, it is conclusive; if it be an interpolation, it still has a corroborative value.

But the name suffices. It calls, first of all, for a great bathing-place; by natural implication, the great bathing-place of the island. Dr. Guest admitted the weakness of his own hypothesis when he said that it would be strengthened if baths should be found at Badbury. What could be found there, or at the Badon of Berkshire, or at the Scotch Boudon Hill, or at any other point that wayward conjecture has amused itself with, to rival the peculiar glory of the Waters of the Sun? Whatever race has come to partake of their healing-power, the name given to the fountain city tells its own tale. Aquæ Solis, Caer-Badus, Bathan-Caester, Bath,—a complete chain, with the same idea in every link. When Gildas wrote, or Nennius, he can have had but this one meaning.

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Caerleon and Bath Hill are of the later battles. Whittaker has identified six for us of the first seven. But we cannot accept his transposition of the Glein or Gleni. Still less can we suppose the series to have begun in Northumberland. How could Arthur have fought his first battle so far in the enemy's country? If we take the Ayrshire Glen, instead of the Northumbrian, we do not greatly help matters. That way lies the Scotch hypothesis, which we have found to be untenable. There remains only the Glem of Lincolnshire, which has some advantage in name and every advantage in situation. A fly-speck or accidental dot of any sort will turn Glem into Glein or Gleni. The same mark, if not placed with exactness, may be read either way, according to fancy. But Glen will not become Gleni without adding an entire letter, nor Glein without inserting one. Moreover, this little stream is in the path of invasion of the eastern column, passing by Lincoln (Caer-lud-coit,) towards Leicester or Verulam. Somewhere in this vicinity that column would naturally be encountered. Its very direct aim at the vitals of the land would compel the earliest attention of the defenders. Everything considered, we need have no hesitation in beginning with the Glem.

In passing, I attach no importance to "Bass Rock" and "Bass," meaning hill, which our Scotch friends have been driven to make the most of in locating the

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sixth battle. Nennius finds no difficulty in saying "the stone by the shore of the Gallic sea," or "the mountain Breguoin," or "Mount Badon." When he says "the *river* Bassas," he means a river, not a hillock, nor a corn-field, nor a silver-mine. We have found that there is a river, with substantially that name, in precisely the right place.

Mr. Whittaker thought Gurnion castle was Vinnvium, or Binchester near Durham; but this will hardly carry conviction. Mr. Skene reads it Guinnion, from Gwen, white, and looks about for a white castle in Scotland. He finds the trace of one which may have had that aspect; also an ominous valley name, and a legend concerning relics that were once preserved there appropriate to this crusader-like battle. The story is even appended to, or inserted in, a rather late version of Nennius. It may be true; and yet the fighting may have taken place otherwhere. More likely it is only a bit of fancy-play in a later time.

Castle Gurnion, or Guinnion, must have been widely known throughout Britain, or it would have been distinguished with more care on the list. It may be the great fortress Garion, or Gareoneum, on the site of Yarmouth. We can understand a zealous rally to save the last remaining stronghold of the Saxon shore, the last bit of land between Kent and Caithness where the cross might yet be upreared. It may have been still

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in British hands, though under frequent or continual beleaguerment.

Or, if we must choose a white castle, why not take that which was pre-eminent in all the land? The bards were in no doubt of being understood when they sung the White Hill of Cynvelyn. Bran, who "was exalted from the throne of London," found burial there, as the story ran, his face being set towards France, that he might still frighten enemies from the city. A doubtful addition to the Triad makes Arthur "discover" this magical head, being unwilling that London should owe safety to any power but his own. If this embodies any truth at all, the Guledig would stand committed to some proof of prowess before the walls; and what could have been more striking than the one said to have been chosen? His onslaught would then be a double one,—on the superstition as well as the Saxon. He blazoned on his shield the sweet face of Mary of Galilee, and drove the routed heathen before him all the day.

This solution is not advanced with absolute assurance, but it can hardly be called improbable. The absence of the name of the city is perhaps an objection. But London may have become a fortress, with very little more, by then. Its most conspicuous feature would be the strong white tower or castle. The place is identified in this way by Taliessin, or whoever wrote the poem attributed to him in Gunn's edition of the

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Vatican Nennius. He has not a word to say of London-town. He finds the White Hill more conspicuous without it.

The tenth battle offers another difficult problem. The name is spelled in divers ways by different copies, Trath Tribruit being one of these. At the other extreme is the Tratheu Trywruid of the bards, which Mr. Skene considers the parent form. Tratheu, he says, abbreviated sometimes to trath or traeth, means the sandy shore of an estuary, or at least a beach. We have then to look for a river having a name that might have been developed from the same stem as Tribruit and Trywruid; a river with a sandy estuary; a river where the Saxons might land as enemies, or otherwise come into collision with the Britons.

There is nothing along the southern or eastern coast of Britain answering these requirements. Mr. Skene takes us to the far northern frontier, on the plea that the Forth was at one time called Werid, which would make the battle-field Tratheu Werid, or Trath Wruid. But what becomes of the first syllable, Try or Tri? Moreover, how came Arthur so early at Stirling? The interval between this and the Pesa (as yet his most northern point that we know of) is not much less than that between London and Liverpool. We might as well send him to Shetland as to the Firth of Forth in one campaign.

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On the western coast it certainly cannot be the Severn, the Mersey, the Liddel, the Avon, the Clyde, or the Dee. Mr. Pearson has suggested the Brue; but the Brue has no considerable estuary. We seem to be restricted to the Ribble, which answers every requirement, unless it be that of name. I do not know its etymological history; but there is no greater gap between Trath Tribruit and Trath Ribble than between Trath Tribruit and Tratheu Trywruid. A little more transformation ought not to stagger our faith. Moreover, if the battle were not there, where was it?

This leaves only the eleventh engagement, the name of which, in one form, has been given. Mr. Skene quotes, "in monte dicitur Agned," and says, further, "one MS. adds 'Cathregonnum,' and another 'contra illas que nos Cathbregyon appelamus.'" Now, Cat means battle. He explains elsewhere that the root of Brithwyr and Cath-Bregion is Brith, feminine Braith, Brych, done into Gaelic as Breac. This word, he says later, "in its primary sense means speckled or spotted; but in a secondary sense, mixed, and may indicate a mixed people." Agned, he thinks, may be derived from "agneaied," an obsolete word meaning "painted." Now, the Picts about Edinburgh were partly Cymric, partly Saxon, and very much adorned with woad. Therefore, reasons he, with the Picts at Edinburgh Arthur must have fought.

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But Nennius gives this as one of the battles against the *Saxons;* and Edinburgh, like Stirling, is too far away. Moreover, the obvious rendering would be the particolored or painted mount, and the people of the painted mount, not the particolored or painted people and the mount of the painted people. "Mynyd Agned" is indeed "painted mount," and that only; and this is the name given by Taliessin to the battle-site.

Now, Camelot was set on a hill, bright with flags and armor, belted with rings of earthwork, in flower with varied architecture, the palace of Arthur being uplifted over all. It was the frontier capital, the brilliant, daring, fighting battle-city, ever expecting attack. It deserved a better epithet than "painted;" but that is not so widely amiss in the language of a primitive time. There can be no doubt of fierce contention there, perhaps more than once, between Briton and Saxon. The modern name Cadbury may refer thereto. It is thus identified, we know not by what early hand, in one MS. copy of Nennius. We cannot do better than accept the identification.

The true story of the Arthurian campaigns would seem to be this. At the same time with the grand assault of Cerdic, at Netley, or in the confusion following the death of Ambrose, the northern Saxons came crowding down, after their usual fashion, with one

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column on each side of the back-bone of the island. Arthur, issuing from Caer Lerion (formerly Ratae, now Leicester), or possibly advancing up the Ermine way, met their northeastern army as it descended or crossed the valley of the Glem; drove it back to the mouth of that stream, and there inflicted, on the shore of the Wash, a defeat whereby men chiefly remembered the campaign. The Saxons may have taken to their boats, and escaped him by sea. One result of his victory was the relief of Caer-lud-coit (Lindom, Lincoln), which had long been standing isolated beyond the true border. Geoffrey puts this later, but we cannot trust him. No doubt the uplands of Lincolnshire were regained.

At the west, the border-line had been carried back to the Mersey. Chester was in danger. The young general went to its relief; took the offensive; pressed the Saxons northward to the Duglas, and struck them a severe blow near Wigan. Perhaps for the time he drove them from the little valley.

But they returned in greater force the next season, and the next, and the next. The bone of contention was there, in spite of indecisive victory, until at last he was able to drive them bodily north as far as Westmoreland. A final success on the Pesa made a complete clearance of all that region. No doubt it put him at once in communication with the doughty

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chieftains who were fighting independently near the great wall.

But the Deirans of York were unbroken as yet, although beaten back along both lines of approach. They invented a third, by way of surprise, and fell into a trap, whence, by all accounts, none issued alive and free. Hardly any other event made a deeper impress on the minds of that generation than this total overthrow in the haunted wood of Celidon. The recovery of York perhaps followed it.

Now the scene moves to the southward. At this time Arthur may first have been formally invested with the supreme command throughout Britain. As Guledig or Imperator, what a claim London must have had upon him!—the most renowned of all his cities, though fallen into decay; the most recalcitrant, and thus in need of conciliation; the most endangered, so requiring aid! He found her with the enemy before the walls, the irrational hope of superstition in her heart. By an act of angry policy, none the less effective, he scattered at once the megrims of his adherents and the forces of the enemy. What the head of Bran could never have done, was the work of the shield which bore the blessed Queen of Heaven. Before it the Saxon rout went wildly towards the sea. London was all for Arthur. Arthur it may have been who gave her in return that wide circle of defences which

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Dr. Freeman has traced on the eastward along the hills of Lexden. Camulodunum was within the enclosure, and so was the best of Essex. Probably even a part of the Caint came under her sway. How the historic city must have bloomed again and hoped again!

But while reawakening the southeast, Arthur may well have neglected, without fault, the far southwest, which would seem almost beyond reach of the enemy. At any rate, he was too far away to know promptly of any assault and repel it in the beginning. Cerdic from his lair by the Itchin saw the opportunity. He had taken that water-way before, and with deadlier intent he took it again. The white sails brightened and darkened, and the long oars flashed in lifting, all along the southern Devonian shore. They rounded the rough promontory of Land's End. They came sweeping back off the northern coast. And soon all the bevy of cities about the Severn River and the Severn sea were fluttering and arming, while the country-side poured in. Riding secure in the open water, the spoiler made choice at leisure of his prey. He bent his swoop on the legion city, the crowned Caerleon.

But the walls were strong, and men rode night and day across the width of Britain to warn Arthur. By night and day, when the news reached him, we may be sure he came hurrying back with his veterans, the men of Duglas and Celidon. An ever-growing force, for

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all the midland country must have been streaming towards and after him. When that comet broke on the astounded Saxons, there was shattering and splintering; and the ocean took them, and Caerleon was free.

Arthur now adopted for the south and southwest a comprehensive system of defence. According to a local writer of Somerset, the distinguishing feature of this was a triangle enclosing a triangle, every corner of each a formidable stronghold. The inner line, twelve miles every way, was marked by the fortresses of Mons Acutus and Tor Hill and the trebly-fortified hill-city of Camelot; the outer line by St. Michael's, Mount Camelot, and Caerleon. They thus came together in a single southeastern apex, doubly based and doubly braced, pointing like a spear-head at Cerdic in his lair. Beyond it, that way, were outlying fortresses, which no doubt had their share of strengthening. Farther west, in what we now call Cornwall, are notable earthwork remains that still bear the name of Arthur. Much of the protective work of the western cities may probably be referred to the same active time.

But, as before, the enemy struck at a remote point, while the work of fortifying was going forward. Perhaps Cerdic had not yet withdrawn beyond Bristol channel. Or he may have taken refuge in Ireland, soliciting the ready aid of Scottish marauders. In any case he selected the shore north of Wales for his de-

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scent. And now again Arthur must hurry away, to defend, as in five earlier campaigns, the thriving city by the Dee. Near it, or beyond it, he met the enemy, and drove them from point to point, overwhelming them at last in the act of embarking at the mouth of the Ribble.

It is easy to understand the growth of vindictiveness in Cerdic. Baffled again and again, he made right for the throat of his adversary, when once more able to take the field. Passing between the impregnable Sorbiodunum and that Caer Caradoc, where the son of Ambrose kept watch over the border, the Saxon broke through to Camelot.

Here was the palace of his arch-enemy, the city of that enemy's creation. Wild with delight, the Saxons came rushing up the slope and swarming over the outer earthwork ring. In hot counter-charges the Britons, favored by position, drove them back again and again. As the one army weakened, far from home, the other grew. Soon the whole region was alive, so that Cerdic could neither advance nor stand still. At the first indication of giving way, we may judge how Arthur would fall on him from the "painted mountain" with his men. We may see the swarm of missiles from every side, the incursions and the cuttings-off incident to their retreat. In repassing the outlying fortresses there must have been hand-to-

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hand work, to get by at all. When Cerdic had safely regained Winchester he may well have given up the overland route as ruinous, while there should be an Arthur in the way.

Yet he gathered all his forces in a final effort, this time choosing for his descent—as once before—the western side. His first object was the sacking of that soft, luxurious bathing city where more of Rome yet lingered than elsewhere in the island, about the upwelling waters of the sun. It was a repetition of the Caerleon campaign, with this change of object and a more decisive issue. Again Arthur came on the invading army before it could beat down the walls or climb over them. Of necessity Cerdic turned to face him, "the Saxons," says Geoffrey, being "drawn out in the shape of a wedge as their manner was. And they, notwithstanding that the Britons fought with great eagerness, made a noble defence all that day; but at length, towards sunsetting, climbed up the next mountain, which served them for a camp, for they desired no larger extent of ground, since they confided very much in their numbers. The next morning Arthur with his army went up the mountain, but lost many of his men in the ascent, by the advantage which the Saxons had in their station at the top, whence they could pour down upon him with much greater speed than he was able to advance against them. Notwithstanding, after

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a very hard struggle, the Britons gained the summit of the hill and quickly came to a close engagement with the enemy."

Then follows a truly marvellous account of single-handed prowess, indicating that Arthur led a furious final charge, and the Saxons, hemmed in on every side, went down by thousands. No greater defeat ever befell them. Cerdic renounced all further aggression, Arthur conceding him the part of Hampshire where he had now been settled so long. The war with Wessex was ended.

The exact site of this memorable achievement may have been Solsbury Hill, near Bath, where Mr. Earle has found the indications of an ancient fort.

Eight, or perhaps even twelve, years had been consumed by this series of campaigns. They were conclusive as to the mainland of what we now call England, if we except hostilities vaguely indicated in 527, an entry which after all may refer to the beginning of the conquest of the Isle of Wight. While Arthur lived, no Saxon ever dared to stir with hostile intent beyond a narrow fringe of coast-line, mainly at the southeast. Nor was there a single expedition in force from the Continent, such as we have heard of before, and shall hear of again, unless we are to so regard the appearance of a Saxon dynasty in Essex.

But there was work yet awaiting Arthur. Berne-

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cian Angles had overrun the eastern and middle Scotch lowlands, and were threatening the cities of the west. Much of the country that they held had been theirs for generations, but the Lennox region was lately won. Arthur moved northward to dispossess them. In a series of battles against a composite force of Angles, Picts, and Scots he made Loch Lomond and its tributary valleys British again.

Before or after this, or both, he made Carlisle his head-quarters, giving life to the still surviving crop of Arthurian legends. He perhaps reoccupied and restored York, as Geoffrey tells us. Entering Scotland again, in a series of battles he overcame the Saxons there settled as far as the carse of Stirling and the eastern sea, took by storm or blockade the almost impregnable Pictish fort at Edinburgh, and gave the dominion of the conquered country in equal shares to three young northern chieftains, Urien being the most noted.

Some years of his life must have been devoted to this great work between the walls. Perhaps the second Guinevere, whom we learn of through Welsh legend, belongs to that period, as she came from the family of a Scottish king. She was the best beloved of the three. The unfaithful and ruinous one followed her. All had golden locks, the especial admiration of the Celt. The second only was found buried by his

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side, her sunny hair yet bright and fresh, a graven inscription preserving her name.

So ran the mediæval tale; but modern research attributes the revelation to priestly and kingly art. We do not certainly know that there was more than one Guinevere. A single personality, differently seen and reported, may well have been broken into three. Gildas and Merlin underwent a similar division, with no just cause, to the great distress of inquirers. We are learning to piece them together again.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE EMPIRE OF ARTHUR.

In the Middle Ages a multitude of impossible adventures and achievements were invented, to fill up his riper years. One of these, the war against Rome, though possibly suggested by that of Maxen Wledig, may contain a kernel of truth. It would be surprising if the great British ruler did not cross the Channel into the lesser Britain. Once there, he could hardly attempt any military movement without finding "Roman" enemies. The fragments of that empire, the remote half-bred or quarter-bred descendants of its colonies and legions, held vehemently by the name. Arthur, now assured in power, may have been more obviously a Celt than ever. Here was an opening for discord.

Wherever he went, or whatever he did, Brittany accepted him with devotion. It discovered a new Avalon; it gave Merlin his magic sleep in the forest of Broceliande; it made a second Camelot of Carduel. Its wild chants perpetuate the sudden onslaught of Arthur, deemed afar, the glimmering over the mountain of his armored host. Almost within the memory

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of living men, the name of this national hero has gone into battle with the shouting Breton. The songs that tell of his glory have not died away even now.

Perhaps—and legend says so—therein was the beginning of the end. So long an absence, with so many of his soldiery, would be sure to awaken discontent. This gathered about a popular chief, son of that Llew to whom Arthur had given rule in the Lothians. The half-conquered Saxons and other heathen folk were very willing to volunteer for service under him. Maelgwn (Lancelot), of North Wales, the strongest man left in Britain, was thinking more of the Guinevere than of his duty to their absent lord. But the tidings were borne to Arthur, and he came rushing back with a bitter heart, meeting a welcome death in the hour of victory.

A whole cycle of tales and poetry gathered about this ending as time went by. Yet the spot is uncertain still. There are those who find it by the bank of a Cornish river; to Tennyson it is hidden forever with Lyonesse, that lost land of the sea; and the Scotchman with greater conviction, identifies a Camlan or Camelon amid his own lakes and heather. It does not seem to be quite literally true that all "King Arthur's table, man by man, had fall'n" in "this last weird battle of the west," or northern moorlands. We meet with some of them again. But the loss, as at

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Arderydd, was no doubt a national calamity, for free Britain followed Arthur in mighty downfall. Supreme in the last hour of his life, he passed, and no man knew whither; but hope went with him. His burial, if burial there were, remained "a mystery to the world." The Briton, harried and suffering, found comfort in the insane delusion of his coming again.

It matters little whether we call Arthur king or emperor or guledig. Whatever his title, to such a man in such a time all the essentials of sovereignty would certainly come. His story is that of a military chieftain, who conquered peace and kept it, filling the land with high ideals and chivalric examples for many years. In the great mass of legendary lore which has come down to us through every channel of Europe, we find this conception repeated and glorified. It has constituted the abiding memory of mankind.

Nor are we without some direct and positive evidence of that period. Says Gildas, writing of the great victory of Mount Badon and what followed, "For as well the remembrance of such a terrible desolation of the island, as also of the unexpected recovery of the same, remained in the minds of those who were eye-witnesses of the wonderful events of both, and in regard thereof kings, public magistrates, and private persons, with priests and clergymen, did all and every one of them live orderly according to their several vocations."

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Such is the witness of a contemporary of King Arthur, —one who is thought to have been a scribe and holy man in his court at Caerleon, yet who rarely saw anything to praise in the doings of humankind.

It was very certainly a brilliant, active epoch. Even science, of the empirical sort which alone was possible in those days, had some share of attention. We find the son of Arthur especially commended in the Triads for his zeal in that regard. We hear, rather amusingly, of Merlin and his nine scientific bards, and of "battalions of scientific ones." Probably, as with the occult of our own day, science and necromancy were not well divided.

But in literature that period shone, being indeed the first of the great eras of British poetry. To Arthur himself are credited some spirited verses in praise of his three "battle-knights." The aged Merlin,—prince, minister, magician, and poet,—threw the whole weight of his influence and example the same way. Llywarch, prince of Argoed, began his career of arms and song under Arthur, although it may well be that his most moving elegies were not composed until after the death of his hopes, his kindred, and the great king. Aneurin, Taliessin, and Cian belong in part to the later hours of the same golden day. They sang on in the starlight.

De Villemarque fixed indeed a much earlier date for Cian Gwenclan (the pure of blood), but in this he

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is at odds with Nennius. He has done better service in rescuing a fragment or two of this bard, which have been kept alive by oral recitation these thirteen hundred years in a corner of Brittany. According to this investigator, there was a MS. volume of Cian's poems in existence near the end of the last century. It perished with the monastery which gave it shelter,—one of the many calamities of the French Revolution.

Cian does not appear at all in the Four Ancient Books of Wales, translated and edited by Mr. Skene; but we have specimens there from divers lesser bards; although Taliessin, Aneurin, Llywarch, and Merddin make up the body of the metrical array. Unfortunately there is no doubt that some of these productions are spurious or have undergone manipulation. Others are subjects of controversy among the most erudite. Even in those of agreed antiquity passages occur to which we have lost the clue, and which read like fantastic nonsense.

This may be in part because of allusion to tales now long forgotten, or the introduction of magical formulæ and far-fetched allegory. But much must also be laid to the uncertainties of translation when dealing with words that have long been obsolete. Thus the very oldest relic of Celtic verse which we possess—older by perhaps three hundred years than even the Black Book of Caermarthen—has been variously construed as

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the "trifling effusion" of a young officer in the Pictish army, who went on a guard with a copy of Juvencus, a Frank servant, and a copper kettle; as the protest of an aggrieved bard, who will by no means become musical until assured of his dinner; and as the lamentation of Llywarch of Argoed, when left to his evil fortune with but a single follower.

Happily the case is not usually so extreme. Taliessin may treat us mockingly to "a primitive and ingenious address, when thoroughly elucidated;" but he often chooses to be comprehensible. Llywarch is always as direct and human, as martial or touching, as need be. There is no misunderstanding the universal language.

Making every allowance, we are fairly well enlightened as to the poetry of that great era. We can even imperfectly distinguish its varying phases. The courtly school of Taliessin, in love with decorative trapping, with historical retrospect, with ingenious and fantastic mystery; the oracular school of Merlin (Merddin), its nearest kin, but more habitually prophetic and more regular in its beauty; the bitter reactionary school of Cian, properly frowned upon and passed by; the pious school, which found voices in Elaeth and other minor bards, though the versatile Taliessin joined them; the epic school of Aneurin; the ballad school of Llywarch, an honor to any language or to any congeries of men.

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Except a happy hit here and there, the whole mass awaits a truly poetic rendering. It was composed in rhyme; we have it in strings of rhymeless words imitating (distantly) the Old Testament and Walt Whitman. Imagine Hohenlinden treated in that way, or Scots who ha'e wi' Wallace bled! Their rhymed triplets are but the echo of Llywarch, with the addition of a final line. Yet he had notes beyond Campbell, beyond Burns,—a more poignant pathos, a stateliness of mournful meditation.

"Bassa's chapel here rests to-night.
Here ends, here shrinks within himself,
He that was the shelter in battle,
Heart of the men of Argoed.

"Kyndylan's hall is dark to-night,
Without fire, without light,
Let there come spreading silence 'round thee.

"Kyndylan's hall pierces me to see it,
Without roof, without fire.
Dead is my chief, myself alive.

"Kyndylan's hall is piercing cold to-night
After the honor that befell me,
After the men, after the women it sheltered."

Here we touch an element of the life and poetry of that time which may not be passed by. It has been said, by Mr. Pearson, that the Celt woman was little better than a squaw; and certainly no other literature

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could present so great an array of verse with so few allusions in it to her and her relations with man. But on closer inquiry one sees that there is more of manly reticence than of brute indifference in this,—an implied respect, a high estimate habitually taken for granted.

We are told that it is "usual for maids to be lovely." That "after Adam, well, he made Eva." We hear of "Mary the Mother of Christ, the praise of women."

That sex is nearly always represented as acting nobly:

> "A female restrained the din,
> She came forth altogether lovely."

It is tenderly appreciated in all human relations.

> "Fair Ffreur, there are brothers who cherish thee,
> And who have not sprung from the ungenerous."

> "Were it the wife of Gyrthmwl,
> Loud would be her scream, she would be languid to-day;
> She would deplore the loss of her heroes."

> "Why should so much anxiety come to me?
> I am *anxious about the maid*,
> The maid that is in Arddig."

Any prospect of future degradation is a real distress.

> "A period will come,
> How miserable that it should come, but come it will.
> Maids will be bold and wives wanton."—MERLIN.

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This tender reverence follows its object beyond life:

"The graves of the sea-marsh,
Little ornament have they.
There is Sanaug, *a stately maiden;*
There is Run, ardent in war;
There is Earwin, the daughter of Henvin;
There are Lledin and Llywy."

Not that her softer aspects are overlooked. Where can anything sweeter be found than this?

"Gwydion ap Don, of the toiling spirits,
By enchantments produced a woman from blossoms."

Manhood keeps its fealty even to the going down of the sun. Cries Llywarch,—

"Young maidens love me not,
I am visited by none,
I cannot move about.
Ah, Death that he does not seek me!

"Wooden crook, is it not the spring,
When the cuckoos are brownish, when the foam is bright?
I am destitute of a maiden's love.

"Surely old age is uniting itself with me
From my hair to my teeth,
And my gleaming eye, which the women loved."

To this princely poet, this veritable knight of King Arthur, the loss of love is evidently the worst part of the loss of life.

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Even when slighter sexual relations are touched upon, it is without levity, indeed with that contemplative melancholy which seems as natural to the Cymry as the love of fighting, of carousal, or of mystery. Says one, resignedly,—

> "To my narrow abode: to the limits assigned to my repose,
> After my horse and indulgence in fresh mead,
> And social feasting and gallantry with women.
> I will not sleep. I will meditate on my end."

Now, these are almost the only references to woman or feminine influence in the Four Ancient Books of Wales, and the few others are like them. To catch their full significance, we must not only remember their very early date, but set them side by side in thought with the next great upgrowth of poetry in Britain, the lowland balladry of their supplanters. A rich mine truly, and one which, from the days of Bishop Percy to those of Mr. Childs, we have never been weary of delving in! Yet things are brought to light which show that Britain had gone backward in what makes man noblest. Here is the feminine element in excess, but hardly in esteem. The wife of the ballads is oftenest a patient Grissel or a household pet in danger of slaughter on suspicion. The maid of the ballads is oftenest employed in eluding or rewarding the atrocities of men. It is quite in the order of things that a fine gentleman should assail

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a poor girl on the highway or break into her bower at night. If her wiles get the better of him, and she slips away unharmed, it is a fair combat of wits, with the laugh against the assailant. If the worst of evils befall her, the minstrel is chiefly concerned to bring about a marriage, and there is matter of congratulation in it all. Wrongs to make the blood boil are a part of the normal horseplay of life. The wise woman will accept the fact and address herself to please the offender, that perchance he may be willing to have her still. Measured by such standards, how marvellously pure and high is the ideal of the Cymric poetry.

Again it has been said, not overwisely, that the love of nature belongs only to recent years. Yet the old bards of Britain, the moment they can get out of the smoke and din of battle, are as alive as Walt Whitman himself to the sympathetic joy of existence, the beauty abounding everywhere. These breathe through all the mysticism of Taliessin.

"The tops of the birch covered us with leaves,
And transformed us and changed our faded state;
The branches of the oak have ensnared us.
Not of mother and father,
When I was made,
Did my Creator create me.
Of nine-formed faculties,
Of the fruit of fruits,
Of the fruit of the primordial God,

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Of primroses and blossoms of the hill,
Of the flowers of trees and shrubs.
Of earth of an earthly course
When I was formed.
Of the flower of nettles,
Of the water of the ninth wave."

Merddyn (or Merlin) begins one of his prophetic poems with

"Sweet apple-tree of delightful branches,
Budding luxurious,"

and keeps repeating

"Sweet apple-tree which grows by the river-side,
Sweet apple-tree of delicate bloom."

Here is a winter picture.

"Let the snow fall; white as mountain land,
Bare the timber of the ship at sea.
Cold the stream, bright the sky.
The evening is brief, the tops of the trees are bending.
The bees live on their store, the noise of the birds is small,
The day is without dew.
The hill-top stands out plainly; red the dawn.
Long the night, bare the moor, hoary the cliff,
Gray the fair gull on the precipice;
Rough the seas; there will be rain to-day.
The thrush has a spotted breast,
Spotted the breast of the thrush;
The edge of the bank is broken
By the hoofs of the lean, crooked, and stooping hart.
. . . The ford is frozen over;
Cold the wave, variegated the bosom of the sea."

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Here, by another hand, is the converse:

"The beginning of summer is a most pleasant season;
Tuneful the birds, green the stalks of plants;
Ploughs are in the furrow, oxen in the yoke;
Green is the sea, variegated the land.
When cuckoos sing on the branches of pleasant trees,
May my joy become greater."

It is Taliessin who tells us of

"The influence of an order of men
Exposed to the breeze of the sky."

He proclaims

"A prize in every unveiling.
When the dew is undisturbed,
And the wheat is reaped,
And the bees are gentle,
And the myrrh and frankincense
And transmarine aloes.
And the golden pipes of Llew,
And a curtain of excellent silver,
And a ruddy gem and berries,
And the foam of the sea."

He it was who composed the "Song to the Great World" and the "Song to the Wind." We find also these among "The Pleasant Things of Taliessin:"

"Pleasant berries in the time of harvest,
Also pleasant wheat upon the stalk.
Pleasant the sun moving in the firmament.
Pleasant a steed with thick mane tangled.
Pleasant the eagle on the shore of the flowing sea.
Pleasant the open field to cuckoos and the nightingale."

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There is also a long poem, attributed to Llywarch Hen, every stanza of which begins with "Bright," a great array of trees and other plants being successively called to mind with this adjective.

Another, beginning "Sitting high upon a hill," is richer and more winning. It belongs to the period of old age.

"I am no hunter, I keep no animal of the chase;
I cannot move about;
As long as it pleases the cuckoo, let her sing.

"At Aber Cuaug the cuckoos sing
On the blossomed-covered branches;
The loud-voiced cuckoo, let her sing awhile.

"High above the merry oak
I have listened to the song of birds;
The loud cuckoo,—every one remembers what he loves.

"The birds are clamorous; the beach is wet;
Let the leaves fall; the exile is unconcerned.
I will not conceal it, I am ill this night.

"Hear the wave of sullen din and loud
Amidst the pebbles and gravel.
What is detested by man here is detested by God above."

Finally (on this head), here is the song of Taliessin to his soul:

"Soul, since I was made in (of?) necessity blameless,
True it is, woe is me that thou shouldst have come to my design,
Neither for my own sake nor for death, nor for end, nor for beginning.

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"It was with seven faculties that I was thus blessed.
With seven created beings I was placed for purification.
I was gleaming fire when I was caused to exist,
I was dust of the earth and grief could not reach me,
I was a high wind, being less evil than good.
I was mist on a mountain seeking supplies (of the breath?) of stags,
I was blossoms of trees on the face of the earth.
If the Lord had blessed me he would have placed me on (left me in?) matter.
Soul, since I was made——"

It will be seen that in form, not less than in substance, this old Celtic poet, as translated, is often startlingly near to the most modern of the moderns. There are indeed passages where the parallel will provoke a smile. For example,—

"I am in want of a stick straightened in song.
I am a harmonious one; I am a clear singer;
I am steel; I am a Druid;
I am an artificer; I am a scientific one;
I am a serpent; I am love; I will indulge in feasting;
I am not a confused bard drivelling;
I am a cell; I am a cleft; I am a restoration;
I am the depository of song; I am a literary man."

One part of the oddity is that the translations were made before Mr. Whitman's writings became generally known, some of them before he published at all. On the other hand, it is very unlikely that they can have influenced him. The resemblance is not confined to

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Taliessin. Most of his contemporaries have a decidedly Whitmanesque appearance and quality in their English dress.

This may be partly due to a remoter likeness which he and they have in common. Life was primitive and elemental to them, as to him, by a kind of half-wilful reversion. A great party clung to the Roman name, and we may have traces of Roman magnificence in the *fêtes* at Caerleon and the love of sumptuous garments. But these were on the surface, and fill but a little space even in their songs. The tales which give them prominence are mostly, if not altogether, of later origin. At heart and in body the typical Briton of that day was a Greek of Homer's time, with a moustache and a tincture of Christianity.

The chief held revel in his hall, on the hill-top, whatever of Roman ease and decoration might linger in the white valley city under his wing. There the lights were; there men slept and feasted; there was the great gathering-din of merry voices about the winter fire-hearth. His first duty and glory was to be an ample dispenser of mead; a princely rewarder of the minstrel who sang before him. If he could touch the harp himself, it was all the more in his honor; but a steady head over the flagon, a mighty arm in the battle, were more indispensable qualifications.

The bibulous element in these lays is ample, absurd,

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and barbaric. Without drinking, there was no fighting. "From the banquet of wine and mead they went to the strife of mail-clad warriors. The men went to Catraeth fed with mead and drunk. Firm and vigorous; *it were wrong if I neglected to praise them.*" . . . "The men went to Catraeth with the dawn. Mead they drank, yellow, sweet, ensnaring. In that year many a minstrel fell." . . . "The men went to Gododin with laughter and sprightliness. Bitter were they in battle." . . . After all, does not the heart warm to that faulty, reckless, gallant people, so alive to the sun and the shadow, so indomitably at war with their fate?

The chieftain must lead in wassail, but in the onset also. The time had not yet come when he could be other than his own most redoubtable soldier. These personal exploits were the ones which admirers vaunted and magnified. Arthur himself had the credit of slaying nine hundred of Cerdic's men with his own hand in a single battle. Of his foster-brother we are told, "It rejoiced Cai as long as he hewed down!" When the great Guledig fell, Lancelot (Maelgwn), the second-best man of his host, came forward rapidly to pre-eminence. All the poetic references are in this vein. The onslaught of Cunedda is "Like the roaring of wind against the ashen spears." Of Urien,—

> "Like death is his spear,
> Killing his enemy."

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Cyndylan may be a "bright intelligence departed," but it was none the less imperative that when he descended to the battle there should be "carnage in two swaths." To call a great general a "burner," a "wild boar," "a bull of conflict," is complimentary in the highest degree.

Partly this grows out of the conditions of warfare. The fighting is chiefly man to man as in Homer's day, the same weapons being used and the same defensive armor, the metal bronze predominating even yet. The war-chariot reappeared, although not to be the national means of assault, as before the Romans came. But there were battle-chargers in plenty. In the song of Llongborth, stanza after stanza is given up to a glorification of Geraint's equestrian resources, and it is more common than not in these poems to find an eminent man and an eminent horse extolled together. The Briton, like the Greek, fought mightily on foot when he must, but was not by choice a foot-soldier. And he greatly prized his steed. The powerful dumb comrade, who bore not the rider only, but the full weight of his armor, who sped away with him from defeat and hurled him crashing into victory, could hardly be extolled too highly. Its trappings, its very food, became not only a matter of daily concern, but of frank and childlike announcement. Even in the minstrel there was an abiding conviction that his hearers might be relied on

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for interest in this rudimentary topic. Homer is at pains to tell us how "Champing golden grain and pulse, the steeds stood by the chariots waiting for the dawn."

Llywarch likewise assures us,—

> "Under the thigh of Geraint were swift racers,
> Long-legged, with wheat for their corn,
> Ruddy ones with the assault of spotted eagles."

Only he has not had Tennyson for a translator.

Here is Aneurin's picture of a gallant young chieftain:

"Of manly disposition was the youth;
Valor had he in the tumult;
Fleet, thick-maned chargers were under the thigh of the illustrious youth;
A shield, light and broad,
Was on the slender swift flank;
A sword, blue and bright,
Golden spurs and ermine.
Caeawg, the leader, wherever he came,
Breathless in the presence of a maid, would he distribute the mead.
The front of his shield was pierced. When he heard
The shout of battle, he would give no quarter wherever he pursued;
He would not retreat from the combat until he caused
Blood to stream; like rushes would he hew down the men who would not yield.
Caeawg, the combatant, the stay of his country,
Whose attack is like the rush of the eagle into the sea when allured by his prey."

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And of the army in motion:

"The men went to Catraeth in battle array and with shout of war,
With the strength of steeds and with dark-brown harness and with shields,
With uplifted javelins and sharp lances,
With glittering mail and with swords."

Elsewhere we read of golden torques, amber wreaths, white plumes, and enamelled armor. There are more peaceful hints also,—the golden cups, the cups of glass, the chief priest's crozier, the rushes that burned in the hall. These from the Gododin. Add the witness of the other bards, the authentic triads, the elder tales, and we may get a fairly just and vivid conception of that sunny, breezy, angry life, its impulsive wildness, its childlike love of indulgence and adornment, its savage simplicity. Perhaps these traits become accentuated as we get farther from the prosperous rule of Arthur.

There was more disturbance of formal and external worship after that; but no doubt the major part of the country, not Saxon, remained as a rule Christian in observance and creed. By an odd freak of sand and sea, two little churches of the Arthurian time, or not much later, have been buried, preserved, and uncovered along the Cornish coast, mute witnesses, but beyond contradiction. They show what was the religious

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growth which sent its rootlets even to these remote and precarious nooks of man's domain. Some light, too, they throw on the ecclesiastical arrangements of the time. But they can do no more. In their prime they were but the rallying-points of out-of-the-way parishes. It would not be safe to infer anything from them as to what may have been at Amesbury, or Glastenbury, or the City of Legions.

Yet it is hard to believe that the peculiar tenets of orthodox Christianity had taken hold of the more intimate beliefs and feelings of men. Death is death to the bards at any rate, whenever the best of them feel deeply. It is the straight and narrow house; no portal opening into glory. Llywarch cries out against old age and longs for its ending; but as an ending, no more. He bewails the encasement of his friend within the black boards; the pity of it that the delicate white flesh must go under ground. He consoles himself for the death of his many sons, not by the joys of Paradise, but by the thought that they died in duty and like men. His nearest approach to a sustaining religious outlook is in the memorable words,—

"What is detested by man here is detested by God above."

Yet any deist might utter them.

Cian had the name of being distinctly anti-Christian, and the few verses of his composition doubtfully sur-

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viving in Brittany may be construed to bear out the charge.

In Myrddin (Merlin) I find nothing more definite than, "Would that my end had come!"

It is true that Taliessin has much to say in some places about theological dogmas, and presents them in a conventional way. But this is when he seems least sincere, and most like one indulging in intellectual exercise. He was, as he called himself, "a literary man," a professional in that line, beyond what can be said of his fellows. He wrote of Alexander the Great and the children of Israel. He chanted "death-songs" for Corroi and Uther, who died before his day, if they ever lived at all. He even turned out a spirited elegy of Cunedda, which has been a puzzle to everybody, so full of personal reminiscence is it, so vast in its impudence,—if he really meant the great chieftain who flourished (according to Nennius) generations before Taliessin was born. But it seems to be admitted that he did know and love the household of Urien of Reged. When Theodric, the flame-bearer, slew Owain, the bard was stirred into deep feeling and high poetry. Yet there is but one reference to Deity, and that no more than a vague cry for aid.

"The soul of Owain, the son of Urien; may its Lord consider its need.
The chief of Reged, the heavy sward conceals him;

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His knowledge was not shallow.
A low cell contains the renowned protector of bards.
The wings of dawn were the flowing of his lances.
For there will not be found a match for *the chief of the glittering west.*
The reaper of tenacious foes. The offspring of his father and grandfather.
When Flamdwyn killed Owain there was not one greater than he sleeping.
A wide number of Lloegyr went to sleep with the light in their eyes."

When he considers what will come to himself it is with as pagan a forecast:

"Until I fail in old age,
In the *sore necessity of death,*
May I not be smiling
If I praise not Urien."

Finally, hear Aneurin:

"I am not headstrong and petulant.
I will not avenge myself on him who drives me.
I will not laugh in derision.
Under foot for a while
My knee is stretched.
My hands are bound
In the earthen house
With an iron chain."

Mr. Skene thinks that this must be the work of an interpolator or extender, since no man could compose

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poetry after his death. But one may treat the future as the present in grim prevision, and at any rate the paternity of the lines need not greatly concern us. Whoever wrote or uttered them, they reflect the feeling of the day. Something very like it recurs in the most painful and direly veracious part of Tennyson's "The Two Voices."

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CHAPTER XII.

FROM THE FALL OF ARTHUR TO THE CONQUEST OF THE SEVERN.

It has been well said that the second great onslaught of the Saxons followed very closely the downfall of Arthur. At this time the Eastern empire was showing unwonted activity. Its great generals drove barbarian back upon barbarian, until the outer wave broke over that island realm which one imperial will had so long held together.

Decay, in spite of him, was already at work. Dissension, the vice of the Celt, had broken out fatally near the throne. His most redoubtable lieutenant, his very queen, had proved unfaithful. A trusted follower and kinsman headed a rebellion for his overthrow. Both court and camp were filled with ugly reminders that his ideals were flouted and the lesson of his life was forgotten. It was time for him to pass to Avalon.

An eye-witness, writing about 564, testifies in this way: "But when these (the generation of Mount Badon) had departed out of this world, and a new race succeeded who were ignorant of this troublesome time

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and had only experience of the present prosperity, all the laws of truth and justice were shaken and subverted." . . . "Britain has kings, but they are tyrants; she has judges, but unrighteous ones; generally engaged in plunder and rapine, but always preying on the innocent; whenever they exert themselves to avenge or protect, it is sure to be in favor of robbers and criminals; they have abundance of wives, yet are they addicted to fornication and adultery; they are ever ready to take oaths, and as often perjure themselves; they make a vow and almost immediately act falsely; they make war, but their wars are against their own countrymen, and are unjust ones." Allowing for exaggeration, we must recognize here the picture of a corrupt society, already doomed. He admits the very few whose "worthy lives" are "a pattern to all men," but says that even the church can scarcely discern them for the "great multitude daily rushing down to hell."

Yet he does not seem to have understood the form that vengeance would take, nor to have seen the onward creeping of the tiger already. By this time, in the far northeast, Ida had landed near Bamborough, roused all the half-enfranchised Angle-folk of the Lothians, and sent his foraying parties far into the lands of the West. At the south of the island, Cenric, son of Cerdic, had essayed the all but impregnable

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Sorbiodunum, and perhaps defeated a sortie of its defenders. Four years later, accompanied by his son Ceawlin, he pushed along the great road leading north-west from Winchester, and fought a battle at Barbury Hill on the western verge of the downs. But to Gildas these events were clearly of no great import. In one place he speaks of the descendants of Ambrosius provoking their cruel enemy to battle and gaining the victory. In another, he mentions, incidentally, "our foreign wars having ceased, but our civil troubles remaining." Probably these engagements appeared to him as the mere occasional ebb and flow of a disputed frontier; trivial things indeed in comparison with the dreadful internecine slaughter of Camlan and the storm which was gathering to break the strength of the Cumbrian Britons at Arderydd!

Excepting the losses in Bernicia, which perhaps had never been very firmly held, the British line of defence remained almost unbroken. The unity of Britain was indeed nominally continued, for Arthur at Glastenbury had passed the sovereignty to Constantine, as the old tale relates; and Caradoc Vriechvras, until he fell in battle at Catraeth, must have been a tower of strength to his kinsman.

But already the brilliant, passionate Maelgwn was urging his own pretentions, which were established after a time in all the western mountain land by some

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vaguely-recorded struggle at the mouth of the Dovey. Bardic song remembers this as the "affair of Corsfeckno." It figures, with an odd aspect of necromancy, even among the pages of the ancient laws.

Damnonia remained to the house of Ambrosius, a realm in those days extending from the woodlands of the Frome as far as the western seas. All of the peninsula was included,—Somerset, Devon, Cornwall.

Eastward and northward of Wales proper, a trio of princes,—Vortipore, Cuneglasse, Cynan,—maintained a qualified independence, aiming at much more. Each had his claims. Vortipore was most likely a descendant of Vortigern. Both ruled in Demetia. Their names obviously have the same first syllable, which is that also of Vortimer, whose sonship is undoubted. Finally a certain abhorrent and unusual offence is charged by Nennius against Vortigern, and by Gildas against Vortipore. These coincidences will not be easily accounted for in any other way.

Cuneglasse may have been, like Maelgwn, of the seed of the great Guledig Cunedda. He evidently arrogated to himself the Arthurian influence and insignia. He may have been given by Arthur some authority in the region between the Welsh mountains and the southern wall. There his dominions lay.

Cynan or Conan is given by Gildas the title "Aurelius," and enrolled by Dr. Guest among the offspring

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of Ambrose. He perhaps commanded in one great battle after the death of Arthur.

In Scotland, Llew of the Lothians had no longer a kingdom. Arawn was lost among the mountain heathen and the mountain mystery, which gave his realm an infernal name. Only Urien, "the splendid prince of the North, the choicest of princes," held out in furious resistance and retaliation. "The lord of the cultivated regions," he is called, and no doubt it was even yet the fight of civilization. But the weapons and the methods—except for some Roman memories—were rather those of barbarian against barbarian. Cries Urien,—

> "Let us raise our spears over the heads of men,
> And rush upon Flamdwyn in his army."

Reged—Cumberland—was Urien's kingdom, and with it Mureif, the region about Glasgow. Against him came Ida and Ida's son Theodric, the flame-bearer, fighting their way westward and southwestward, until the water-shed of the island, from the Peak to Selkirk Forest, bore the sinister name of the wilderness,—a broad, wasted border-land given over to the reciprocal forays and furies of the sons of hate.

The greater cities of lowland Britain most likely prepared as best they could for individual defence, calling to their aid the subject population without their walls. The lesser towns banded themselves together

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in provincial groups. Thus Caer Segeint (Calleva, Silchester) seems to have maintained until the very last a Roman military organization and the eagle standard, while Bensington and Lenborough, with two more, made the upper Thames valley and its northern tributaries "the country of the Four Towns." All that remained of civilized Britain was actively fortifying and actively seeking alliance.

One expedient of this time was probably the oddest ever adopted for collecting an army and keeping it together. Perhaps the origin was in the public shows and entertainments, modified from those of Rome by Ambrose and Arthur. Experience showed that a great feast and drinking bout would draw the fighting Celt from afar, and hold him while it lasted. If trials of skill were added, and rough tilting, so much the better. From this, there was an easy transition to a furious inroad over the border of the nearest enemy. The British leaders took the lesson to heart. Whenever there was a weak point to be made strong, or a Saxon frontier to be overrun, invitations went out abundantly to a great Christian merry-making. The bards grew eloquent in praise of the ruinous foibles that answered so well the purpose of the hour. But the Saxons awoke also to the under-meaning of this Celtic jollity, and their dogged infantry came likewise to the feast.

At the eastern end of the northern wall in the

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Manau Gododin of the great Cunedda, a notable fortress town, probably with a Roman basilica, looked out over the sea. Whatever its past vicissitudes, the Britons held it now, with the Picts to the northward and the Saxons to the southward, confederate and hostile. It was a desperate place for the gathering of an army, and some unusually audacious enterprise must have been on foot. The flower of the land were drawn from its remoter regions, a few, including the son of Cian Gwenclan, being actually cut off on the way. A strong force gathered, and fell to at the good things provided, only laughing the more when they found that a vastly greater host had invested them. From time to time they intermitted their orgies to issue in detached parties and fight, for pure love of fighting, upon the battle-strand, Cat-traeth. But soon they had quite enough to do in defending the outer wall. This was taken and retaken. Again there were frantic sorties, but they could not break the deadly grip of the Saxon. It closed more and more tightly after every spasm. The Britons were too few to endure their heavy losses. The enemy came swarming over among them. Desperate fighting went on from street to street. Finally the basilica was stormed, the combatants wading in blood as they fought on. The garrison was all but obliterated, a bare handful cutting their way to life and liberty.

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Something like this may be disentangled from the confused repetitions and eulogiums of Aneurin. Whether his poem, or collection of poems, should be read as describing one battle or two battles, we need not consider. Mr. Skene supports the latter view. But in part, at least, it relates the great slaughter of Catraeth,—probably between 550 and 560,—wherein, with many a soldier, "many a minstrel fell." There also—heaviest loss of all—fell Caradoc Vriecvras, the great "battle-knight" of Arthur.

We may suppose this to have preceded the battle of Barberry Hill, if not the attack on old Sarum. It was but natural that vehement aggression both at the south and at the north should follow. Not in Wessex and Bernicia only, but all along the line of the Saxon shore, the hostile intruders felt that their grand opportunity had come. Through the uneven woodlands north of London they broke to the sacking of Verulam, overthrew its marble columns, destroyed the tombs of its martyrs, and laid it utterly waste. They followed their old road to Caer Lerion, and that city passed away. They swarmed from the fenlands over the cities of Cambridgeshire, and so far obliterated them that even relics of their former life and beauty were rare when the Norman came. They drove the eagle of Caer Segeint to shelter within its walls; set the houses ablaze (according to the old story) by the flight of fire-

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laden birds; took the town by sudden onfall and massacre, and left the ruins empty of human occupants. They starved out the impregnable fortress of Old Sarum, and drove the monks of Amesbury westward to a younger choir. They gathered about the circuit of London's defences, wrangling with each other for the prize, until Ethelbert of Kent, though defeated by the forces of Wessex, found means to establish an East Saxon king in the conquered city. Whether or no in this instance a period of destruction and desolation intervened is matter of dispute. Probably the company of foreign merchants found favor with the comparatively enlightened Kent-folk, and were permitted to keep alive a nucleus of London, if nothing more. In 604 it was the East Saxon capital, whence King Saebert ruled also over Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

For the dates of these events we have generally nothing very definite. Old Sarum was apparently in British hands in 552. Verulam had been taken and destroyed before Gildas wrote, and probably as early as 550. London may have held out until 568, when Ethelbert was defeated at Wimbledon in Surrey, but is more likely to have surrendered earlier, as he moved up the Thames. The remainder of lowland Britain fell rapidly. In 571, Cuthulf, a brother of Cenric and Cutha, led an expedition into the territory of the Four Towns, between the Chiltern Hills and the Cotswolds,

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a bit of domain marked off naturally, as Mr. Guest has observed, from all the rest of Britain. Only one battle is recorded in this campaign, probably the final overthrow of a retreating enemy, for the place (Bedford) is more northerly than any of these cities. They all surrendered, or were taken, as a necessary consequence, and the conquest of the Thames Valley was ended.

In the north a more vigorous war was maintained by the Celtic woodlanders and the soldier-race about the wall. Llywarch and his sons, the most eminent of Arthur's men yet alive, were the spirit and strong arm of this resistance. Taliessin and Aneurin, with other bards, kept life and fire in their followers by their ringing martial lays. Urien fell, and his severed head was borne away by a comrade, at the saddle-bow, that it might not be left in the hands of a despiteful enemy. In a strong poem of this ghastly ride which has come down to us, the bearer celebrates the virtues of his dead friend and kinsman, yet cries out, on the pity of his fate,—

> "A head I bear,
> The head of Urien, who governed a court in mildness,
> And on his white bosom the sable raven gluts."

And again,—

> "The delicate white corpse will be covered to-night
> Amid earth and green sods:
> Woe my hand that the son of Cynvarch is slain."

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But he left in Owain a successor as formidable; and when Theodric, the flame-bearer, slew the young chief, Rhydderch, an ally of Urien, took up the conflict. But now the pagan party at the north was gathering head for revolt, under a chieftain named Gwendolew. Perhaps the rebels were in the Saxon interest, perhaps merely instigated by the neighborhood and example of a warlike anti-Christian people. At any rate, the movement grew to such proportions that Rhydderch was obliged to call in the aid of Maelgwn and the Scottish King Aidan of Dalraida. These three awaited their enemy by the cliffs of the Lyddel, in the Pass of Arderydd, leading northeast from Carlisle and the great wall. The result was a decisive pagan overthrow and the establishment under Rhydderch of the strong kingdom of Strathclyde, which drew under it all Cymric and other Celtic fragments that would have Alcluyd (Dumbarton) for a capital. This little state lived on for centuries, and at one time threatened to reverse the destiny of Britain.

But the loss of life in civil war was a deplorable concomitant of this victory. Another was the greater severance of the northern Britons from what had now become the great Welsh kingdom of Arthur's half-recreant Lancelot. In a movement of wayward generosity Maelgwn might have rendered aid again. But the Saxon did not immediately threaten his mountain

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strongholds, and he would hardly bestir himself without special appeal. It is less easy to understand his neglect of the intermediate Cymry, the Cumbrians proper, who held by precarious tenure, and finally not at all, the march of Deira. Somewhere in this quarter lay Llywarch's own little kingdom of Argoed, and his remaining sons were fighting for it desperately. Was there an old enmity behind this inaction,—the enmity of one who had wronged Arthur against Arthur's faithful counsellor?

The character of this Welsh monarch, Maelgwn, first identified with Lancelot by De Villemarch, is perhaps the most intensely dramatic of his time. What he was in later romance we know best of all by Tennyson's presentation,—a very human figure, dashed with guilt and magnanimity, full of "warmth of color," daring all things, yet weak before the allurement of sin. How he appeared to an embittered moralist of his own time, let Gildas inform us.

"And likewise, O thou dragon of the island, who hast deprived many tyrants as well of their kingdoms as of their lives, and, though the last mentioned in my writing, the first in mischief, exceeding many in power and also in malice, more liberal than others in giving, more licentious in sinning, strong in arms but stronger in working thine own soul's destruction, Maglocune, why art thou foolishly rolling in that black pool of

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thine offences? Why dost thou wilfully heap like a mountain upon thy kingly shoulders such a black load of sins? . . . What holy man is there who, moved with the narration of such a history, would not presently break out into weeping and lamentations?"

Of Llywarch we get a very different picture. He muses thus:

"I was formerly fair of limb,
I was eloquent in speech.
The men of Argoed have ever supported me.

"What I loved when a youth are hateful to me now,
A stranger's daughter and a gray steed.
Am I not for them unmeet?

"Sharp is my spear, furious in the onset.
I will prepare to watch the ford.
Support against falling may God grant me.

"Four-and-twenty sons have been to me,
Wearing the golden chain, leaders of armies.
Gwen was the best of them.

"For the terror of death from the base men of Lloegyr
I will not tarnish my honor."

It is impossible to think of Llywarch but as a hero, —impulsive, life-loving, franker than any child, but strong of will, sound in faith, warm and true of heart, —in the simplicity of his nobility the best living representative of the illustrious dead.

But his striving ended after all in the loss of Ar-

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goed. The steps are not traceable, for the poet is more absorbed in his bereavement and personal experiences than in the needs of later history. We get the general impression of a series of engagements,—the names of some are given,—but with nothing at all of their relation to each other in time, place, or event. They probably occurred in the decade between 560 and 570. The final outcome forced him to take refuge with Cyndylan of Shrewsbury, his kinsman, a feudatory of Brochwel of Powys and ruler over the region about the Wrekin, the upper valley of the Severn. Many of his family had been slain. The remainder went with him.

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE OVERTHROW OF THE WEST.

WHATEVER remained of Roman and Arthurian Britain was now chiefly to be found in the valleys of the Severn, the Eden, the Exe, and the Dee. The first, with its tributaries, drained by far the largest area, and reflected more and wealthier cities than all the others together. The forced upgrowth of these towns must before this have come to an end, partly by reason of frequent menace and the visible shadow of fate, but even more because one-half of Britain had melted utterly away.

On Glevum and Aquæ Solis the news of the battle of Bedford must have fallen as a more than ominous blow. Doubtless they opened their gates and their hearts, but their eyes were opened also. Just over the eastward hills had been a little Celtic world of customers and neighbors. Now that world had been obliterated as in the passing of a dream. They must prepare, with straitened resources, for the assault of their unmerciful enemy. With them stood and fell Corineum, the one fastness yet remaining in British hands over the Cotswold Ridge.

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Nowhere in the island was there a stronger place; yet, jutting out as it did from the main line, its position was highly perilous. Its riches, altogether exceptional, were flaunted in the very faces of too many hungry marauders. Cuthulf crouched with longing eyes on the northeast, beside his new acquisition of Eynsham. Ceawlin and Cuthwin hounded on their forces from the edge of the Marlborough downs. It must have been mightily garrisoned, for, after all, the storm of war swept by or swept around, breaking far in the rear, within view of Mount Badon.

The tale of this conquest has been well told by Dr. Guest and after him by Mr. Green; yet their route to Deorham is purely one of conjecture. Is it not on the whole more likely that the Saxons, finding Corineum too hard for them, withdrew from the direct attack and yet once again took to the sea? What more natural, too, than that they should aim immediately at the scene of their greatest overthrow! A victory there would be victory indeed.

Perhaps a time was chosen when the Britons of the south were depleted by the northern wars. They must have had a contingent at Arderydd. It may not yet have returned. Or some unusual accession of strength may have determined the West Saxon movement of A.D. 577.

We do not know the commander of the Britons.

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There may have been a fraternity of leaders no less than of cities. "Three kings" were slain; but only one name of these (Conmael, Peak-Mael) can tell us anything. It sounds like another variation of Maelwas and Maelgwn. Surely, too, there was the place for the monarch of Gwynedd and overlord of all Wales to fight his last fight. There, within view of Mount Badon, might Arthur's unfaithful lieutenant redeem his honor, so far as it lay within redemption, by repeating the great exploit of his dead leader. But this hope, if he held it, was vain. The day went ruinously against him. "In the lost battle borne down by the flying" we find the fitting end of Lancelot.

Deorham has been treated as a critical point in the long struggle, since the defeat cut off Damnonia from the body of Britain. Yet there can have been little co-operation even before. Constantine probably regarded the Welsh princes in the light of usurping pretenders. Communication by water was uninterrupted, and easier than by land. But when the Four Towns were allowed to fight their enemy unaided; when the heroes of Argoed, for lack of men, were driven foot by foot from every abiding-place; when all Lloegria, taken piecemeal, had become the prey of the Saxon, it is plain that anything like a national resistance was at an end already.

Still the overthrow at Deorham was a great calamity.

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Every form of disaster followed in its train. The country that it threw open to ravage was unexcelled in Britain. All along the road to Corineum, all up and down the Avon valley and the Severn, the Roman villas, with their life of luxury, lay thickly sown. Celtic supremacy, however long continued, can hardly have put away so much that made the convenience and brightness of living. The population was dense and thriving even yet, and the face of the country all in bloom. The blow fell, and the blossoming-time was ended. The circle of hostility spread outward on every side, until it broke against the bases of the Welsh mountains beyond the Wye, stirred the forest-leaves of Dean and Arden, drove the miners of Mendip from their toil, and was lost amid the marshes of Glastenbury. All the open land was the worse for that fiery flooding.

The doom of Bath came more quickly. Fighting but nine miles away and racing confusedly thither, it is no wonder if the fugitive and the slayer brought panic and havoc together into every home. Through the gate and over the wall came the torrent of Saxon lances. The fury of the onset made destruction instant and complete. The bright Temple of the Sun, with all the luxurious beauty that had grown up about it, was thereafter no more. Nothing remained but the lonesomeness of desolation, stirring into mournful pity even

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the minstrelsy of the victor. "The Ruin" of the Codex Exoniensis has for its topic this unhappy city.

"There the baths were
Hot on the breast.

* * * * * *

"Bright were the burgh dwellings,
Many its princely halls,
High its steepled splendor;
Many a mead-hall
Full of human joys;
They perished in wide slaughter.
Death destroyed all
Their renowned warriors.
Therefore these courts are dreary.

* * * * * *

"There many a chief of old,
Joyous and gold-bright,
Proud and with wine elate,
In warlike decoration shone.

* * * * * *

"Perishes the work of giants;
The roofs are fallen,
The towers tottering,
The hoar gate-towers despoiled;
Shattered the battlements,
Riven, fallen."

It is no wonder that Dr. Freeman declares, "Aquæ Solis, Glevum, and Corineum fell like Jericho and Ai."

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But we really have no proof, except as to the former. Winchester and Canterbury, York and London, were probably granted mercy. Rutupiæ held even its Roman name so late as the time of Bede, for he mentions it with little change. We need not assume that more than one of the three cities near the lower Severn was visited with fire and sword. Admittedly the period of desolation for Cirencester and Gloucester must have been "short indeed." Perhaps it never existed at all.

Mr. Green admits that the country people may not have been driven from the soil which Ceawlin won. In a very few years we find Britons aiding a revolt against him. No doubt the villas and villages had been roughly raided, or even torn to pieces and set on fire; but while the inhabitants kept their limbs they could flee, and the woods and rough uplands were always a shelter.

In these shadowy labyrinths the odds were with the men who could lie in wait and who knew the ground. The Saxons came to have a horror of them, and would rarely venture where so much was to be lost and so very little won. Thus they never yet had penetrated the great forest of Andred; they gave the lesser Frome woods for a hundred years the name (and avoidance) of an unexplored sea, and their frightful disaster in the forest of Celyddon taught them to

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respect the independence of the free Britons of Elmet. The same held true of every ridge and fen and stretch of rough waste country throughout Britain. The Saxon conquest was until then of the lowlands and open lands only. Nor did it ever afterwards go the length of wholly dispossessing the Celtic woodlanders. Mr. Green elaborately puts before us the effect of such tracts in checking or deflecting the various currents of invasion. But he hardly seems to be aware that the real obstacle was always the forest with its garrison. It is probable that such places never had been and never again will be so densely populated as they were then.

But such Celtic fragments, even when actively hostile, could not greatly impede an invader who kept the way of the valley. Ceawlin devoted several years to making sure of the country behind him, then pushed on up the Severn, through the forest of Wyre, to another tempting prey.

Here was the domain of Cyndylan with whom Llywarch had taken shelter. Pengwyrn, now Shrewsbury, was his capital; but this and the other Celtic towns along the water-side or up among the hills were but of slight account in comparison with the one great prize of his dominion, the stately Roman city of Uriconium. It lay in a little cluster of native satellites, "between Tren and Traval, between Tren and

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Tradwyd," the Wrekin, with a "bright fort" for coronal, towering above them all to give it name.

Its wealth and size have been matters of astonishment, for it was very near the mountain border. But a great mining country lay nearer still, and it made a necessary station in all transit between the Vale Royal and the Severn Sea. In some particulars it surpassed every other city of Britain. The streets have a modern width, instead of being the mere lanes with which the Romans and their successors were generally content. Traces of culture are found, making its life oddly real and familiar: a Latin inscription in one place, in another a surgeon's box with a scalpel as bright and keen as if new. It long lay open, like the cities we know, to every comer; but when walled, in later times of danger, the circuit was even greater than that of London. Its public buildings, its places of entertainment, were generous and costly. The predominance of marble in its architecture had given it the name of "The White City." Its roofs were of thin stone, besprinkled with mica, which must have gleamed afar like silver in the moonlight, or shone like flecks of gold in the rising sun.

We do not know of any resistance to the march through the woodlands. It may have been a surprise, for "a horseman from a Caer below" is reproached with tardiness in his warning. When we discover the

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defenders, they are partly gathered about the city walls, partly in the almost impregnable fortress on the height of Dinnle Wrecon.

The latter was the head-quarters of Cyndylan, while Llywarch took post in Uriconium and its native suburb, Tren. Dr. Guest makes these identical, but the mention of them in the Marwand Cyndylan evidently points to some distinction. Probably they were, yet were not, the same, as in the case of every half-absorbed outgrowth. Tren may have lain partly within and partly without the walls on the down-river side.

Here the strain of the combat would come, and here we find Llywarch frantically calling for aid. Years had not taught him patience under fire nor Fabian generalship. "Cyndylan, a cause of grief thou art," he cries aloud. "Set forward will not be the array,"—"shall a man be no better than a maid?" He taunts him with his moustache also. And Cyndylan, who has been quite right in clinging at every sacrifice to his best chance of victory, begins at once, in true Celtic fashion, a rush downward to the vale, at this imputation on his manhood.

Llywarch sees his error when too late, and beseeches him to "hold the slope," to "hold the top until the Lloegrians come through Tren." Wisely enough he adds, when wisdom can no longer avail, "It is not called a wood for *one* tree."

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But now Cyndylan, "obstinate in the host," will by no means be persuaded. "With heart of greyhound he descended to the turmoil of battle. . . . With heart of wild boar he descended." Then straightway arose "in the meadow the clatter of shields." The "carnage in two swaths" became dreadful. But it was a lost battle to the Briton. He was beaten from the low ground, from the houses, from the slope, from the very crest. "I marvel that the bright fort is no more." Both Tren and "the white town" were given over utterly to the fire and steel. The dead Cyndylan was borne away to Bassa's Chapel, far up the valley. The wave of devastation rolled after him, until his castle on Carrec Hytwyth lay a ruin, and "Llys Pengwern, is it not in flames?"

The tale is told poetically, but there is corroboration of its truth. The relics brought to light of recent years repeat it in their own way. The capture was instant, violent, and merciless. Repairs of the forum wall were interrupted suddenly. The bones of women and children have been found still blackening, where they were cut down in the streets. The skulls are mainly Celtic of the Ivernian mixture, as might be expected of the inhabitants along that frontier. Evidently the Saxons had the game of slaughter in their own hands.

Yet there must have been a multitude who escaped,

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as Llywarch did. The strong city of Deva, or Caer Ligion, away to the northward, would be their first refuge, their point of rallying.

Here Brochwel, Prince of Powys, however appalled by the rapid succession of disaster, gathered men with all speed from the fragment that remained of his realm. As the enemy drew nearer, he marched forth and met them in a pass of the hills, where rise the head-waters of the great stream which they had followed so long. The encounter must have been fierce to desperation, for the Briton, if beaten here, could scarce hope to make another stand. The fury of the defenders prevailed at last. Cutha fell. Ceawlin with his discomfited army went backward in bitter chagrin, taking vengeance all the way.

The spoil which they bore with them was the chief good they had of this inroad. As far as the forest of Wyre the land was retaken. No living Briton except the very few survivors of Mount Badon could remember so signal a triumph. He chanted in his elation of this "battle against the lord of fame in the dales of the Severn; against Brochwel of Powys, who loved my song." But the shining city of the Wrekin was gone forever.

This battle of Faddiley was the beginning of a spirited rally by the Britons. It was also the turning-point of the fortunes of Ceawlin. Victory there

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would have given him Chester and the Vale Royal, would have opened up the whole northern country as far as Carlisle, would have raised him above all other English monarchs by the head. But with defeat his hold upon even his own people grew weaker. A great body of the men of the lower Severn, Briton and Saxon together, revolted under his nephew Ceolric. Probably some of Brochwel's men came through the upper woodlands to join them. Ceawlin retired from the gathering storm towards the older part of his kingdom, but finally turned at bay near the vale of the White Horse.

The position was a strong one, crowning the same "downs" on which he had fought and won before at Barberry Hill, a memory of good omen. It was strategically important, also, for here the road from Surrey, a region which his other great victory of Wimbledon had gained for him, crossed the ancient Ickneild way that led to the more northern conquests of his brother in the Thames valley. A third Roman road established communication with Winchester and the first acquisitions of his grandfather Cerdic. Every line was open which might admit West Saxon reinforcements or be followed by the king of Wessex in retreat.

The former did not come in sufficient volume, or the mixed hostile multitude of the West were too sudden and strong in their fury. We know little of the fight,

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except that the slaughter was extreme on both sides, and that the overthrow of Ceawlin was beyond all retrieving. He made no further effort, but fled at once from the kingdom, and died, an exile, within the year.

This was the battle of Wauborough, A.D. 592. It must have distinctly modified the relations of the two peoples, for Ceolric would hardly wish or dare to treat arrogantly the men who had given him his crown. Thereafter Wessex, the land of Alfred and of Arthur, is to be regarded as equally British and Saxon.

Meanwhile, the rest of the island was not in a slumber. Aedan, one of the three kings who conquered at Arderydd, was to the Cymry of the northwest what "the lord of fame" may have been to Ceolric. Before his time the enmity between the Gael of Dalraïda and the true Briton was no less inveterate than the enmity between the Briton and the Saxon. The Scot was one of the hereditary ravagers of the isle, one of the pagan worriers against whom it struggled interminably. All along the western coast his colonies had made their lodgements. At one time nearly half of Wales proper, from St. David's to Anglesey, had been in their hands. They may even have seemed likely to do by the western mountaineer as the Saxons were beginning to do by the lowland citizen. But these Celts of Hibernia had not the Saxon doggedness. What they gained they lost again. One by one they fell under Cymric rulers,

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their strongest offshoot in Gwynedd being lopped off bit by bit, until the father of Maelgwn completed the work by the storming of Mona. No doubt this ended also the druidic revival in that island.

But Aedan was a convert, and a very efficient soldier of the faith. St. Columba had taken notice of him, and marked him for high honor. According to the saint's account, this was the inspiration and command of an angel. Perhaps we should substitute the term "illusion" now. But whatever the warrant, the consecration followed quickly. One year after Aedan's first great battle, the holy hands of Columba gave him a special prestige among the princes of Christendom, He became, for a time, the Dux Bellorum or Guledig of the northern country.

The first result was a military outburst of zeal. In battle after battle the Scots and Cymry whom he led won back all, and more than all, that had been lost at Catraeth. A series of campaigns, filling the interval between A.D. 580 and 590, gave them the region along the southern shore of the Forth to its great estuary.

Yet almost at the same time the Bernician ruler had made good his losses over and again by annexing all Deira. Thenceforward these united Saxon powers were called Northumbria, a strong new kingdom extending along the eastern coast from the Forth to the Humber, and inland over the water-shed of Britain.

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Before long this conqueror died, and Ethelfrith, his son, took up the work, marching northward with an army. Aedan met him beside the Liddel, where their boundary had been made real by a strong wall known as the Cattrail. An obstinate battle followed. One part of the Northumbrian army was cut to pieces, but the remainder held firm and routed their enemy at the last. Aedan could not recover this defeat. His leadership ended. The supremacy of Dalraida was postponed for many generations.

But there was work yet for Ethelfrith in Deira, where malcontents were kept astir by the neighborhood of the exiled princes of their old royal line. One of these had crossed into Mercia, that midland kingdom which was founded we hardly know how. The other took refuge at first in a tongue of British territory, jutting far out from the main body of Wales into the heart of Yorkshire. This was Elmet, a rugged little kingdom with a savage king. Leaving his son Hereric in that den,—perforce it may be,—the prince of Deira sought the court of Powys. After him followed the attack of Ethelfrith.

Brochwel was aging now. A generation had all but gone by since he flung the conquering Ceawlin, in the height of his power, back from the Vale Royal to the valley of death. But men remembered, and he was still "the lord of fame." The king of Northum-

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bria may have been the only Saxon living who would dare measure arms with him. At least Mercia and its overlords had forborne any serious aggression. Wessex was reorganized under a king of his choosing. The other Teutonic fragments were mere dependencies or too far away.

Caer-ligion, his capital—the Deva of Roman times—had a notable share in this prestige. Its earlier refinement and splendor no doubt had nearly passed away. But it had been a place of refuge from the beginning, and it was so still. Unlike Uriconium, Verulam, and Calleva, it was in its origin a fortified, a notably fortified, city. Whatever of civilization remained in the western land must have centred there. To this Chester hurried the fugitives from the wreck of the cities by the Severn, with whatsoever they could bear away. In this Chester gathered all who had felt the approach of danger along the Ribble, the Mersey, or the Dee. Even outside its walls a great monastery had grown up under its protection, feeling safe. The men of religion did not forget the town of shelter in the hour of its need. When the spoiler came, there were a thousand monks of Bangor on the field, raising their weaponless hands and imploring voices to the Lord God of Sabaoth. But they won no answer, except that of the merciless heathen steel. The aged king had fled already, making a most inglorious end

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of a glorious reign. The British army, king-forsaken and God-forsaken, fought on vehemently, as the great losses of the conqueror testify. But the waves of utter ruin passed over their city. Two hundred years later the Danes took post behind the broken walls, but only as men beset might stand at bay among the fragments of Uxmal or Palmyra. There was never again a complete massacre and sack of a great British city, but not even at Anderida can the frightful work have been done more thoroughly. And now at last the dominion of the Northern Saxon extended quite across the island from sea to sea.

This brings us to the end, if not a little beyond it, of the two centuries which I have designated as "lost" from the history of Britain. But the word has been growing less applicable, our knowledge becoming less conjectural, the darkness brightening continually through twilight towards day.

The attitude of both races in every way was changing. Apart from the spreading influence of Christianity, there were reasons why this should be. Sixty years before, the Saxons held by a doubtful tenure only the mere fringe of the ocean. This they had been colonizing from of old, or had won bit by bit, in circumstances which made the Briton who remained among them a serf, an apostate, or, at best, a woodland outlaw.

In the great body of the island this could not be.

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The splendid resistance of Ambrose, the long series of Arthur's victories over their greatest leaders, had taught the Saxons more than respect, if less than fear. When at last their great enemy was no more and their warriors were pouring into the island by every gate-way, a sense of insecurity, of unreality, must have haunted them. The land which had bred an Arthur might breed one even greater than he. Prophecies were abroad already, pointing to such a deliverer. Later times found, or fancied, their fulfilment, in the brief outflaring of the glory of Cadwallon.

But, however this might be, Arthur's old soldiers and their sons were to be met with everywhere. One of his lieutenants, if we read the name aright, had faced the Saxons to the death on the field of Deorham; another had all but overcome their northern forces along the Bernician border, matching the terror of his name against that of the Flame-bearer himself; a third, with all his house, had fought the Deirans at the passage of the Llawen and the Ford of Morlas, and had held Uriconium against Ceawlin until Cyndylan came rushing down to his doom from the "bright fort" of Dinnle Wrecon.

The Saxons had won, but in great masses of territory, whence only a part of the fighting population would or could remove, and that population was dominated by the spirit of the great dead. Perilous neighbors

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these, unless under some convention for living side by side in amity. The conqueror, who could neither ignore the Celt nor make an end of him, and who soon had desperate warfare with his own kin, ended by accepting him as a brother in arms. The Celt, for his part, was very willing to attack or resist any Saxon, even with Saxons for fellow-soldiers and allies. In time local feeling would draw together more closely those of the two races who dwelt near. From this enlistment of subject Britons it was no great step to calling in the aid of some independent British kingdom.

Among the Saxons, a change, incident to growth, was taking place. A multitude of wrangling tribes and petty sovereignties were grouping themselves, in shifting allegiance, under two or three main heads. First, Ethelbert of Kent was the nominal overlord of everything south of the Humber. Then Raedwald of East Anglia took his place, leaving Ethelbert very little besides the Caint and the dependencies of London. But Ethelfrith of Northumbria challenged this supremacy, in particular demanding the extradition of Eadwine, prince of Deira, who had passed from Mercia to the court of Raedwald. The armies clashed together on the banks of the Idle, which "ran red" with the slaughter of Englishmen, and there was an end of Ethelfrith and his pretensions forever.

Now, for a time, the land was more nearly one than

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it ever afterwards became during centuries. Eadwine, the exile, set up the "Empire of the English" with its capital at York, whence Rome had ruled the island. Every Saxon state obeyed him, excepting Kent, and that had only its earlier boundaries. A standard of purple and gold was borne before him as he rode; a tufted spear, the Roman tufa, when he walked the streets. His wide power was exercised well and wisely. It was the boast of Englishmen long afterwards that "a woman with her child might walk scathless from sea to sea in King Eadwine's day." But his was a fruit ripening too early. It lasted only until a stronger than he arose in Mercia and overthrew him by British aid.

For the strength of Celtic Britain was not wholly gone. Three considerable Roman cities yet remained in native hands,—the Damnonian Isca (Exeter), Caerleon upon Usk, and that Luguballium, or Caer Luilid, which we know as Carlisle. There were others of lesser note. With each of that trio went a strong British kingdom, cut off (by land) from its fellows, but still formidable.

The central mass, Wales proper, was able to retort invasion for invasion within a few years after Caer Ligion's downfall. Under Cynan (Conan), as Dr. Guest supposes, the Welsh army penetrated to Bampton in Oxfordshire, where an indecisive battle was

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fought, with heavy losses. According to Henry of Huntington, the Roman formation and tactics once more made their appearance in the field. But his narrative has a very fanciful air. As to the fact and seriousness of the engagement all are agreed.

The northern kingdom of Strathclyde maintained its independence for about four hundred years, with one brief interval of submission. To its Roman legacy, Carlisle, by the southern wall, Dr. Freeman awards the distinction of being the only city in Britain which was taken by the Saxon, yet became British again. Yet Alcluyd (Dumbarton) soon became the capital, outshining the elder town in both Celtic and Saxon eyes. Bede alludes to it contemporaneously as "the strong city of the Britons." Even so late as Geoffrey of Monmouth, it was the one chiefly remembered.

The country between them, "the ancient diocese of Glasgow," is believed by a writer in the Encyclopædia Britannica to have been "the cradle of the Welsh language and literature." That it added greatly to Cymric poetry is beyond dispute. But in the eminently active life of warfare the energies of the region found a more adequate outlet. The heroic element runs through all that comes to us, by record or tradition, of the isolated yet indomitable soldiery between the walls. It was clearly the conjunction of Strathclyde and Wales with the Mercian forces which made Penda and Cad-

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wallon dominant for a time in Northern Britain. Probably Dynaint, by reason of distance, rendered no aid. In the beginning this was perhaps the most powerful and cultured of the remaining Celtic states, and it long remained under illustrious protection and leadership. Yet it never seems to have shown the aggressive enterprise of mid-Wales or Strathclyde. The reason may have been that it had only one neighbor—Wessex—and no opportunity for alliance and combination, while there was little hope in any single-handed assault.

Its people maintained their own boundaries well; few better. The Saxon has never shown a more dogged front to misfortune. The history of their long isolated struggle can never be written; but the landmarks which we have, by way of date, are enough to stir the blood. A hundred and seventy years after the death of Arthur—a hundred and forty after the severance from the rest of Britain—the king of Dynaint is still "the glorious lord of the western realm," even in the mouths of his enemies. Three-fourths of another century went by before the men of Wessex could push their frontier to the Tamar. And Cornish independence did not finally come to an end until A.D. 815, three centuries and a half from the beginning of the Saxon-British wars. The Celts of Damnonia won the best that could he hoped for, protracting their resistance

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until subjection had no dreadful meaning. Fairly good terms were undoubtedly granted.

But whether at the north or at the south, it was the fight of a doomed people. The pressure of the more powerful Saxons was upon them, and never relaxed for long. We see in the Cymric literature that they often felt what now we know. Old prophecies were feverishly astir to keep alive the courage of the people. The red dragon (cried the bards) *would* yet rally and drive out the white; Leminitz, the mighty, *would* appear and end the rule of the invader. Nor were the clergy more backward. The chastisement of Britain had been permitted for her sins, and for them only, they thundered. Let her people turn to the ways of righteousness, and the Lord God would come marvellously to their aid.

Now and again, as in the days of Ambrose, of Arthur, and of Cadwallon, it must have seemed that the hour of deliverance indeed had come. But such hopes had always a disastrous end, and the sense of loss, which was less illusionary, was also more abiding. It is to be recognized in the deep underlying pathos of all the old Welsh poetry. Even the vauntings of war and revelry strike one as the enforced distraction of a soul which will not brood; the desperate effort of a high-spirited race to catch some wild side-gleams of brightness in following the black path to ruin.

There is one old poem, translated (excepting a single

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word) by Mr. Skene, wherein we have the bereavement of the land set forth very simply and quaintly, but with so much of the essential spirit of the Cymric people that I cannot do better than make its ending my own.

The bard addresses his hound Dormach, "truly the best of dogs, which belonged to Maelgwn:"

"Dormach with the ruddy nose. What a gazer
Thou art upon me! Because I notice
Thy wanderings on Gwibir Vynyd!"

And the dog replies:

"I have been in the place where was killed Gwendolew,
The son of Ceidaw, the pillar of songs,
Where the ravens screamed over blood.

"I have been in the place where Bran was killed,
The son of Gwenyd of far-extending fame,
Where the ravens of the battle-field screamed.

"I have been where Llachaw was slain,
The son of Arthur extolled in songs,
Where the ravens screamed over blood.

"I have been where the soldiers of Britain were slain,
From the East to the North.
I am alive, they in their graves!

"I have been where the soldiers of Britain were slain,
From the East to the South.
I am alive, they in death!"

THE END.

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